SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE

★ 2006 HONOUR ROLL ★

THIRTY-NINE CANADIANS WHO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE IN P.60

SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL WHO WEARS PRADA P.78

MACLEAN'S

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CANADA'S MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR

OUR ANNUAL CANADA DAY POLL

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I don't really trust the police 31%

Today's parents aren't doing as good a job 60%

I have lots of time to sit and think 52%

I believe in angels 62%

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Gay adoption? No big deal. 40%

I hardly ever have sex 28%



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AFTER THIS ISSUE, *Maclean's* will be appearing on Thursdays, ahead of weekend papers

We'll tell you why we don't like Mondays

After nearly 30 years of putting out a magazine every Monday, *Maclean's* has decided to stop. From now on, we'll be putting out a magazine every Thursday.

Weekly current affairs magazines in North America have been published primarily on Mondays for as long as they've existed. There may have been a rationale for this long ago, but we don't believe the schedule suits the lives and habits of our readers today. The simple fact is that people have more time to read at the end of the week and on the weekend. And since we've increased the amount of content offered in each issue of *Maclean's* by 50 per cent over the last year, it makes sense to deliver it when readers have more time to enjoy it.

As well, we'll now be putting our magazine into stores fresh when newsstand buyers are out shopping. It is an established fact that retail traffic is highest at the end of the week. *Maclean's* has seen extraordinary improvement in its newsstand sales over the last year, and we expect a further advance as a result of this move.

There are other benefits. At the moment, it takes most copies of the magazine three to five days to leave our editorial offices and arrive in your home or on newsstands. The new schedule will cut this lag almost in half in the vast majority of our markets. As a result, readers will see a faster response time to major stories in Canada and around the world. Early delivery will help us consolidate our position of leadership in the field of Canadian public affairs. We will no longer be following the weekend newspapers, we will be out ahead of them. The whole of the magazine will be more urgent and relevant than ever.

Getting a national magazine to the farthest corners of the country is not without its challenges. Some parts receive the magazine at the beginning of the week in the short term. However, as we make further adjustments to our schedules in the coming weeks, and give our distributors (and Canada Post) time to adjust to our new system, more and more of our readers will be able to enjoy the magazine pre-weekend.

Meanwhile, we are sending off the old Monday delivery schedule with a bang. The Canada Day double issue you hold in your hands features the return of two great *Maclean's* features from years past. For the 20th time in the magazine's history, we bring you the *Maclean's* Honour Roll, a celebration of Canadians doing exceptional and commendable work in fields as diverse as science, athletics, diplomacy and entertainment. We also offer, after a year's absence, the annual *Maclean's* poll, conducted this time by University of Lethbridge sociologist Dr. Reginald Bibby.

We hope you enjoy Canada Day and this special edition of *Maclean's*. We will return after our annual summer break with a new issue which most of our subscribers will receive Thursday, July 13 or Friday, July 14. M

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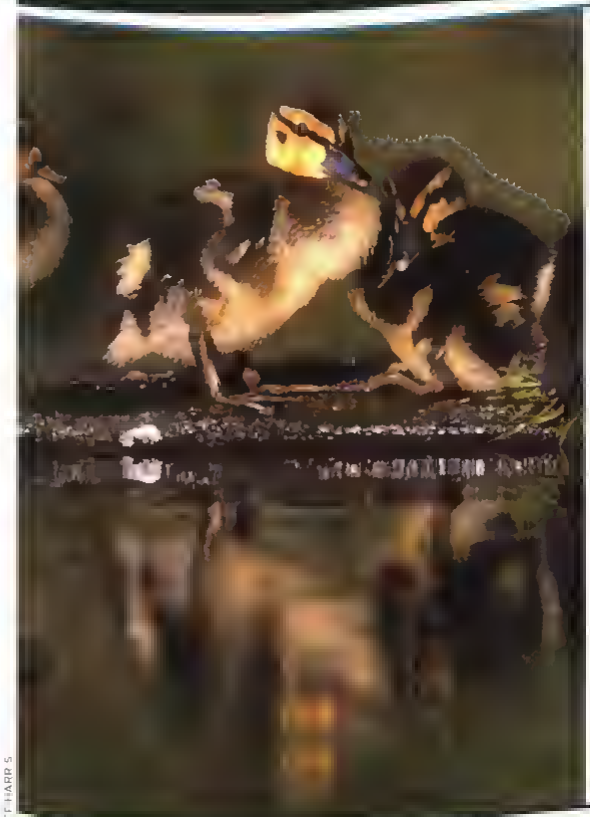
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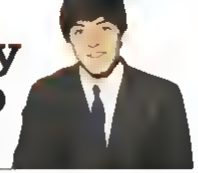
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'To suggest McCartney needed unpopular women to get him through is ridiculous'



MAPLE LEAF PLOTS

WOW, YOUR ISSUE ("Homegrown terror," Cover, June 19) dares to address a perspective that flirts with political incorrectness, and it feels like a jolt of fresh air. Mark Steyn's "You can't believe your lyin' eyes" (Books) is, without question, the most provocative journalistic response to the alleged Toronto area terrorists I have seen thus far. And let us not ever forget that "provocative" is a healthy positive word. God bless (any God, I don't care) the forthright.
Dixie Seatle, Toronto

PERHAPS WE NEED to take some steps back and try to understand the root causes of militant Islam—my sense is that it has a lot to do with the plight of the Palestinian people over the last 60 years.
Akbar Javer, M.D., New Westminster, B.C.

I AM NOT anti-immigration. We are all descendents from immigrants—even Canada's natives if you believe the Alaskan ice bridge theories. We have always needed good immigrants to build our country and each wave of immigration brought its own brand of discrimination by the resident bigots. But for all the discrimination, I don't remember hearing of any of these groups planning on blowing up Parliament or cutting off heads. Our biggest mistake has been our obsession with multiculturalism, and this has allowed zealots the foothold to spread their imported hate and convince the second generations that they are being oppressed. To me the biggest insult to being Canadian is to read in print someone being called Irish-Canadian, Italian-Canadian or in this case an Arab-Canadian.
Bill Paterson, Emsdale, Ont.

IN THE AFTERMATH of the arrests of our accused homegrown terrorists, who appear to be mostly middle-class adolescents motivated as much by the "ain't I cool" factor as hard core ideology, Canadians need to resist the wave of knee-jerk reactions sweeping through some of the media, and redneck attempts to pin the blame on our tradition of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism continues to be a major strength in this country—it is cultural exclusion and the "everyone should be like us" mentality that will create real breeding grounds for cultural and religious zealots of all types. The road of cultural paranoia leads nowhere.
John Volkovskis, Gabriola Island, B.C.

BRAVO TO Mark Steyn! Finally someone in the media had enough guts to tell it how it is. As a society we are playing a dangerous game when we are trying to hide the truth behind words like "democracy" and "multiculturalism." Trying to play "safe" only aids enemies. Every man has to take a stand for what is wrong or right. Unfortunately, history offers many examples of countries playing political "games" by not taking a stand against evil, only to prolong their "survival." Europe before the Second World War would ring the bell.
Oksana Bumstead, Flamborough, Ont.



STEYN'S HARDLINE approach to extremists is commendable, but I wonder what the factual basis is for his statement, "for most Western Muslims, Islam is their primary identity." Would *Maclean's* have printed this if it read "for most Western Christians, the Church is their primary identity"? It is dangerous to disseminate such sweeping generalizations.
Bruce Richards, Toronto

FLYING LOW

WOULD YOU EXPECT a free beverage and a package of cookies or pretzels on a Greyhound bus? On city transit? No. How can we realistically expect flight prices to stay down ("The new, frugal face of air travel," Business, June 19) if we are being pampered in flight? Pack a lunch or fork out $5 for a sandwich. Or remember how bad the food was—that will curb your hunger until you land.
Brenna Haimes, Victoria

WEDDING INVITATIONS

MANY ARE of the opinion that a same-sex couple who are committed to a lifetime of cohabiting should not be denied state sanction of their union ("George W. Bush really likes same-sex marriage," Opinion, June 19). This is a serious issue, but I choked laughing when I read Paul Wells' totally risible and ironic line "the U.S. President wants it back, in the hope that a few Republican voters will be so addled by visions of same-sex couples fornicating." A trip to my trusty Canadian Oxford Dictionary reveals that the definition of fornicate is "(of people not married or not married to each other) have sexual intercourse." Ha!
R.W. Fentiman, Courtenay, B.C.

WILL YOU STILL NEED ME?

TO BE BORN stupid is something beyond our control. To make ourselves ignorant and rude is beyond my comprehension. Your writer Rosalind Miles ("Happy birthday, Paul," Music, June 19) seems to really dislike Paul McCartney. Do we still need him? Whether she would like to admit it or not, McCartney is the most successful musician, composer and singer of all time. To suggest he needed unpopular women to get him through is ridiculous—give the man some credit, please.
Gord Lefort, Nanaimo B.C.

WHO WAS WHO ON THE HILL

IN YOUR PIECE about Jack Layton and the house owned by his cousin, you say that one-time owner Ed Clark was an MP who was involved in writing the National Energy Program ("Please don't tell Jack where the Nutella is," Capital diary, June 5). Clark was not an MP, but a senior civil servant. Ed probably has a bunch of detractors out here, but since he took the helm of the Toronto-Dominion Bank, he has acquitted himself in a most redemptive fashion. While visiting Toronto a few years back I recall a situation where I had an insufferable toothache and met Clark for the first time. He offered the services of his dentist to me the next morning. His assistant had gone to the trouble

Q:

What's the supermodel of business models?



The slim new Moto Q.

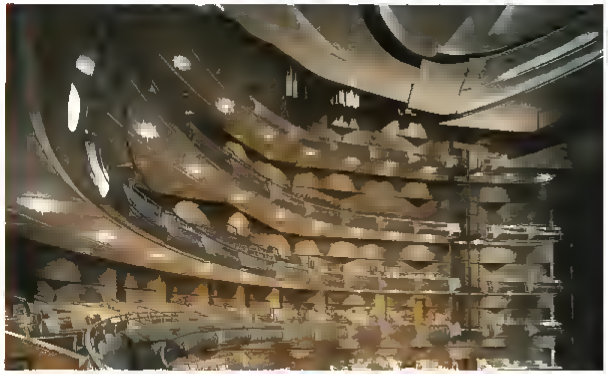
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'Bravo to Mark Steyn. Finally someone had the guts to tell it like it is. We are playing a dangerous game when we try to hide the truth.'



CANADA's first national opera house opened in Toronto on June 14 to rapturous applause

of booking an appointment and everything turned out dandy. Ed Clark is a true Canadian gentleman, never mind the NEP.
Eric Hayne, Edmonton

IT WASN'T US

WE WERE DELIGHTED to see Barbara Amiel's story on the Four Seasons opera house, (*Bravissimo!*, Music, June 12). However, we were surprised to read the Canada Council "announced a bonus of more than $550 million to the arts in 2004." The money was announced not by the Council, but by the Canadian heritage minister as an extension of that department's 2001 Tomorrow Starts Today initiative. The Council's portion of that increase was $25 million per year.
Donna Balkan, Senior Communications Manager, Canada Council for the Arts, Ottawa

SAD GOODBYES

THANK YOU, *Maclean's*, for the heart-warming and heart-wrenching account of the life of Arlyn Christopher Ryan (The End, June 19). This touching portrait underscores the fact that the real heroes in this world are not movie stars, business tycoons and professional athletes. Rather, they are the average Joes and Janes who painstakingly and clumsily plod through life, trying to better themselves, while gently sowing seeds of kindness, hope and love. In addition, Arlyn's story teaches us that life is often inexplicably unfair, and assuredly there are no guarantees of tomorrow. Seize your todays with passion, and embrace the simple but enduring pleasures and treasures that life offers.
John Whitlock, Brantford, Ont.

FROM THE STACKS

GREAT TO SEE the plug for the online comic strip *Unshelved* ("What happens in the library stays in the library," Recommended, May 29). It's a great strip that I look forward to every day. By the way, I began working in libraries in 1964, and the last time I saw any technophobic spinster librarians with pencils holding up their buns was about 35 years ago, and even then they were rare.
Alan H. MacDonald, Librarian Emeritus, University of Calgary, Calgary

THIS PLAY'S THE THING

THE DROWSY CHAPERONE is a homegrown musical that has taken the Great White Way by storm. It received 13 Tony Award nominations and won five. So how does *Maclean's* handle the story? By writing a snarky, ridiculous, trying-so-hard-to-be-hip review ("'Nudge, nudge,' aren't we clever,'" Stage, June 12). And what do you use for that title quote? Something from a guy, Bruce Kimmel, who wrote a movie more than 30 years ago. Who cares? Did he have anything to do with this production? One would think that Canada's national newsmagazine would be championing a Canadian play. I would like to offer congratulations to its creator Bob Martin. It definitely is clever. *The Drowsy Chaperone* is the little play that could.
Steve Veale, Toronto

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Maclean's, established 1905, is published weekly except for occasional combined issues, expanded or premium issues, which count as two subscription issues, by Rogers Publishing Limited, a division of Rogers Media Inc. Rogers Publishing Limited, One Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, Ont. M4Y 2Y5. Montreal office: 1260 avenue McGill College, Bureau 1111, Montreal, Que. H3B 4G7.

Maclean's MSN 0024 9262. Full subscription prices for one year, including taxes: $58.86 (GST) $64.89 (QST), $64.62 (HST), $64.05 (PST). U.S.A., $98.90 surface; all other countries, $328.00 airmail.

CANADIAN POSTMASTER: Undeliverables and change of address notices to: *Maclean's*, P.O. Box 860, Station Main, Markham, Ont. L3P 8H8.

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40010830. Registration No. 08873.

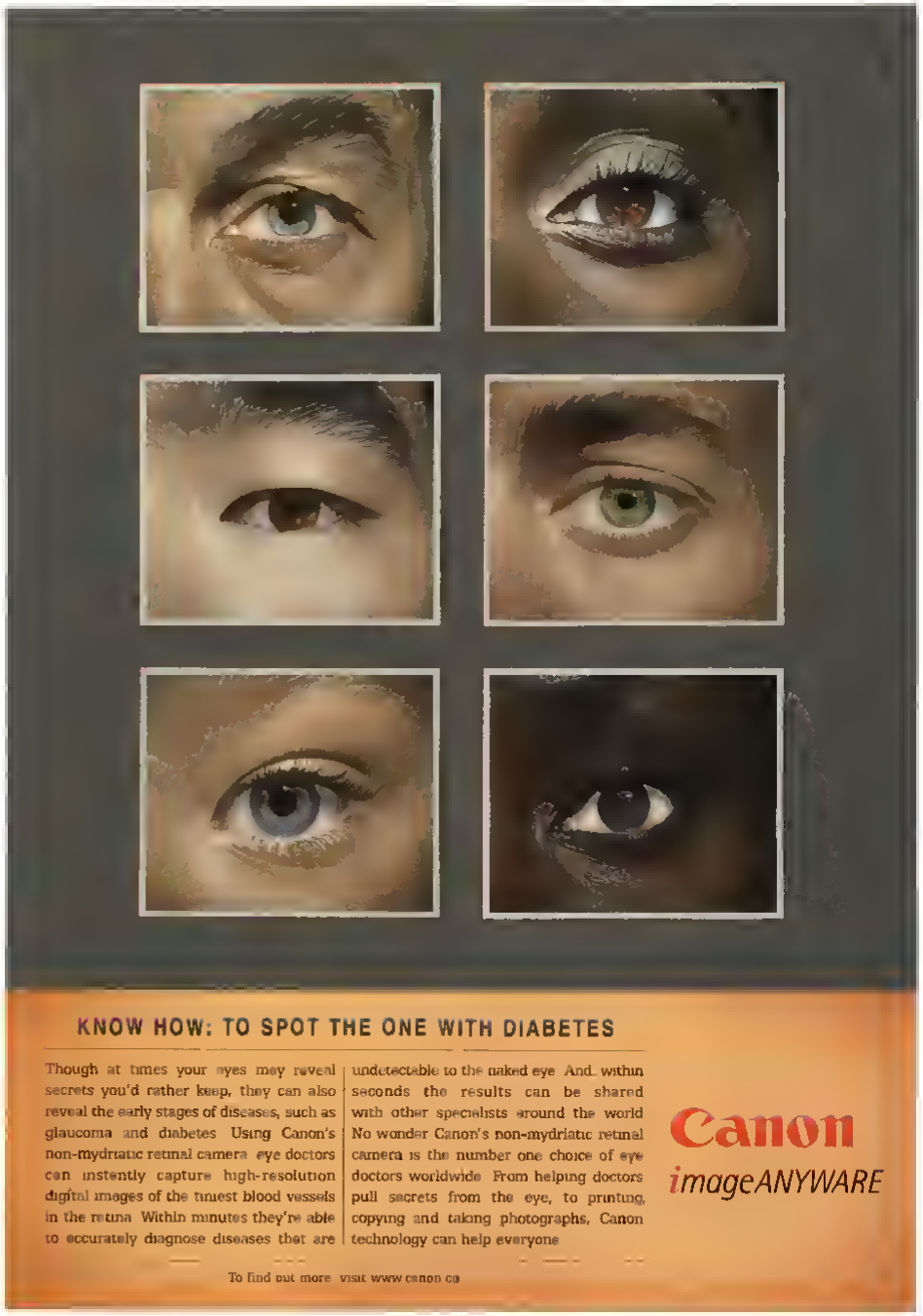
We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP) and the Canada Magazine Fund, toward publishing and editorial costs.

U.S. POSTMASTER: Periodicals postage paid at Niagara Falls, NY. USPS 106710. Office, 3424 Niagara Fls Blvd, Niagara Falls, NY 14304-1058. Send address changes (form 3579) to *Maclean's*, P.O. Box 4541, Buffalo, NY 14240.

Printed in Canada by QuebecorWorld Inc.

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STEVEN EVANS



When you open a can of worms, what do you find?



The Citadel in Quebec City was built in the 19th century by Elias Walker Durnford for multiple purposes. The British garrison there could defend against an American attack from the west—or against an uprising in the French-speaking city to the east. Even today, this brutish fortress, cut into a cliff face, is a bear to get into. On Friday, my cabbie had to drive through two thick walls, along narrow streets, stopping three times so I could wave my press pass at earnest soldiers. For all their ability to make themselves heard inside the Citadel, the two dozen protesters outside the gate might as well have been in Bonn.

This entrenched redoubt is where Stephen Harper brought his cabinet to celebrate his close relationship with the people of Quebec.

The federal cabinet was meeting here for the first time since the 1950s, on the eve of St. Jean Baptiste day—or as Harper called it, in keeping with local fashion, Quebec's "Fête Nationale." The next day, after this column's deadline, he was to attend a "picnic" in the Beauce. That would be the home of Maxime Bernier, his industry minister, the most reliably federalist corner of francophone Quebec. One presumes the picnic venue wasn't drilled into the side of a mountain, but clearly Harper prefers congenial venues for what are made to look like bold gestures.

When one comes to Quebec for what many Quebecers call Quebec's national day, one risks being asked whether Quebec constitutes a nation. Harper and his ministers were. Their answers were...long. "I see that Mr. Boisclair"—that would be Andre Boisclair, the young Parti Québécois leader—"is asking that question," Harper said to a journalist who was asking that question but who was not André Boisclair. "The last time I answered that I said that I note that the National Assembly has made such a declaration and I recognize that it has done so."

Ah.

But "the real question" which must be put to Boisclair, Harper said, was, "Will he hold a referendum on the independence of Quebec? Yes or no?" Later, pressed, Harper called the question of Quebec's nationhood "a semantic argument that doesn't serve any real purpose." That's an easy sentiment to applaud. I applaud it. But then, I didn't bring the federal cabinet into Quebec City and call the weekend's holiday a "national" holiday.



Behind two thick walls, in a cliffside fort, Harper declared his closeness to Quebecers

When one opens a can of worms, one sometimes finds worms.

After Harper left, four of his ministers took turns at the nation's (nations'?) most secluded scrum microphone to field questions of their own. The two Quebecers danced their own jaunty dance around the nationhood question. "Quebecers and the National Assembly are sovereign within their own areas of competence," Maxime Bernier announced.

Josée Verner was even more fun. "Quebec has a unique and distinct personality," she chirped. "Quebec is happy to be part of this government." Then she asserted that you certainly would never see a Liberal government daring to bold a cabinet meeting here.

The assertion was built on shaky facts and an appalling assumption. The entire Liberal caucus, not just the cabinet, met in Quebec City in the late 1990s and in rock-ribbed nationalist Chicoutimi in 2002. Those meetings were in hotels, not in forts in cliffs, as will the party's next leadership debate in September.

But why should it be otherwise? Perhaps one day our politicians will stop asserting that any Canadian should ever expect to be greeted anywhere in Quebec with anything but open arms and good food. Joe Clark once held a party conference in Quebec City, levelling the same dark, stupid calumny against Stockwell Day's Canadian Alliance. Or more properly, *against the people of Quebec*. Because what's the assumption here, if it isn't that Quebecers cannot be trusted to keep the peace when strangers visit?

One dark secret of Canadian politics is that Quebecers are not wholly different from non-Quebecers. Harper made that point more successfully with his words than his pageantry. Are his policies rejected here? Nope. his plan to send cheques to parents "is actually supported more strongly in Quebec than anywhere else in the country." His Afghanistan adventure receives less support here, but enough, "on balance." On Kyoto, "Quebecers are like all other Canadians: you ask them whether they support Kyoto, they say yes. You ask them what they think it means, they have no idea."

Harper won 10 Quebec seats in the 2006 election. Whether that was the beginning or the end of a breakthrough will depend on him, on Quebecers, and on the Liberals. Several pundits—Rex Murphy, Chantal Hebert, even Michel Vastel—say Stéphane Dion is the surprise of the Liberal leadership race. Quietly, Conservatives admit they would rather not have to think about that, because Dion would present them with something besides an empty net in Quebec. Fortunately for Harper, Liberals have worked hard lately to make his life easy. Why would that stop? Happy Canada Day. Is Canada a nation? Sometimes. M

ON THE WEB: *For more Paul Wells between editions, visit his blog at* **www.macleans.ca/pwells**

CLEMENT ALLARD/CP

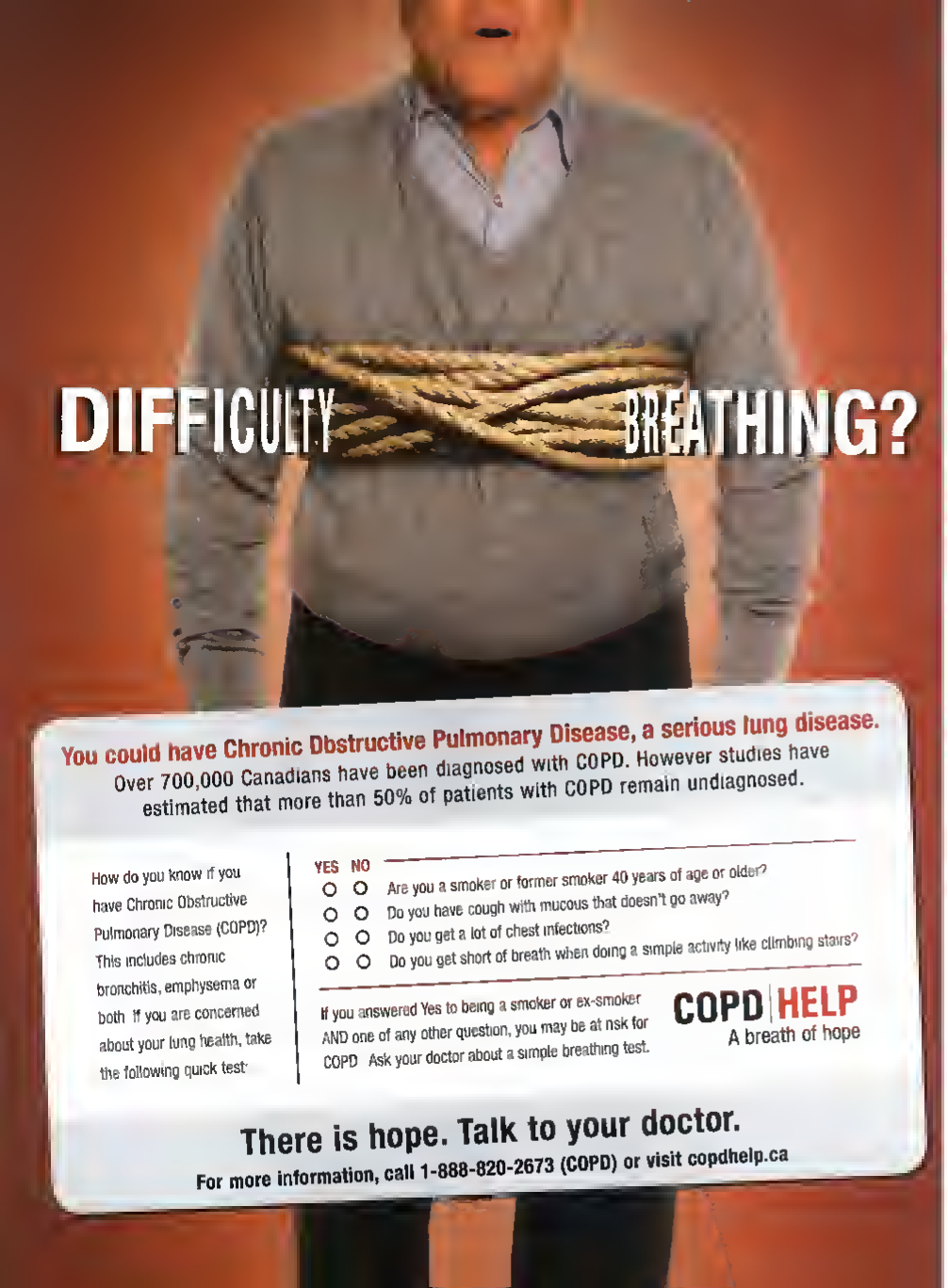
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Half-baked nonsense, from both the left and right


ANDREW POTTER

On June 19, the Fraser Institute confirmed its status as the *Adbusters* magazine of Canadian think tanks with the announcement of its 30th annual Tax Freedom Day. Every year around this time, the Institute trumpets the date after which Canadians stop working for the government and start working for themselves.

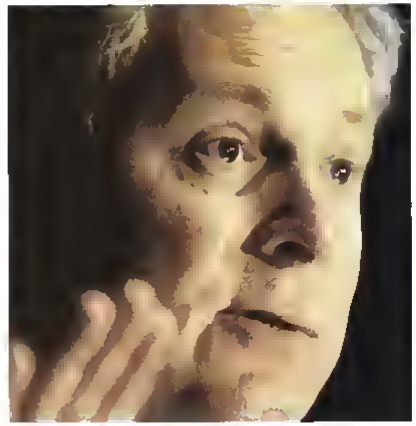
Like *Adbusters*' infamous Buy Nothing Day, the Fraser Institute uses half-baked economic notions to advance a one-sided political agenda. In this year's press release, the Institute claims that the point of Tax Freedom Day is "to provide a simple reference point" for understanding taxation. "It is nearly impossible for an ordinary citizen to have a clear idea of how much tax they really pay. Tax Freedom Day gives Canadians a true picture of their total tax burden."

As if. The Fraser Institute routinely plays with the inputs to make sure TFD falls as late in the year as possible. They make it look as if the average Canadian has to work almost half the year just to clear his or her tax bill. Given that the wealthiest 10 per cent pay about 45 per cent of all taxes, the real "tax freedom day" comes far too early for the overwhelming majority of the population, given the value of government services they consume.

The real point of Tax Freedom Day is to draw an invidious contrast between private and public spending. The implication is that, after a certain date, the "burden" of public spending ends and the "freedom" of a life of private consumption begins. Yet it isn't as if anyone suddenly stops consuming public goods after June 19. To see the problem with this line of reasoning, consider an analogous holiday called Mortgage Freedom Day—the day that you stop working for the bank, and start working for yourself. You are seriously missing the essence of the bargain if you ignore the fact that, while you're "working" for the bank, you're living in the bloody house.

Unfortunately, the Fraser Institute doesn't have a monopoly when it comes to dealing in politicized tax policy. Last week, the Quebec government announced plans to impose a carbon tax on oil and gas companies as part of a legislative package aimed at fighting climate change. Reaction across the political spectrum was positive, since just about everyone accepts that a carbon tax will be the centrepiece of any serious attempt at reducing man-made emissions of greenhouse gases.

Then Premier Jean Charest went and spoiled it by insisting that oil producers would not be allowed to pass the tax on to consumers, saying companies should see it as their contribution to a cleaner environment. "If they don't see it that way, I'd regret that. I think they'd be totally wrong. They're going to be on the wrong side of this issue." Charest was egged on by Stephen Guilbault of Greenpeace, who said, "I think it's totally indecent for these companies to say we'll pass on the cost to consumers."


JACQUES BOISSINOT/CP

Charest's carbon tax is bad-faith economics, and it will do nothing to cut emissions

This is depressing, for a number of reasons. For starters, too many on the left persist in believing there is a fundamental difference between a tax on businesses and a tax on individuals, and that there should be more of the former and less of the latter. This is mostly a myth, since corporations generally pass their taxes on to consumers. Take the GST as an example. Most Canadians think of the GST as a federal sales tax, a charge levied at the cash register and paid by consumers. That is certainly what it feels like.

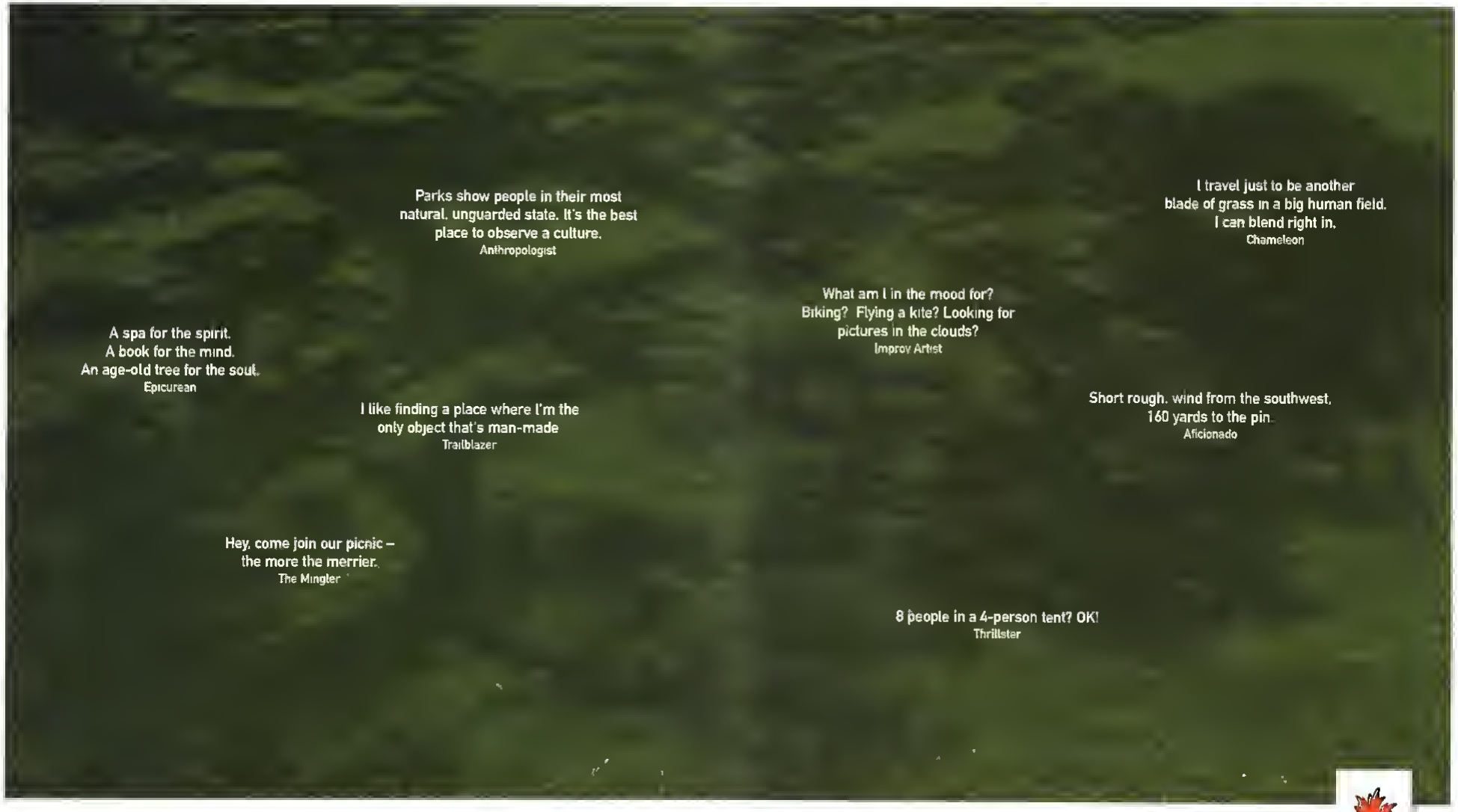
Yet unless you are self-employed, when was the last time you cut a GST cheque to the government? The GST is a value-added tax that gets passed on from business to business until it reaches the end of the consumption chain, where it is ultimately paid by the final consumer. Sure, the Quebec government could probably force oil companies to "hide" the new provincial hydrocarbon tax in the retail price of gas, but it is hard to see how it could prevent them from similarly passing it on to consumers.

More to the point: Why on earth would anyone want to prevent the tax from being passed on? The idea behind a carbon tax is that it will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This means that, in the case of gasoline, consumers must either drive less or use more fuel-efficient cars. But if the cost is not passed on to them, they will have no incentive to do so. Why does Jean Charest insist that it should be otherwise? Because fuelling resentment over Alberta oil interests is a slam dunk for a Quebec politician, right behind "complain about Ottawa" in the Book of Everyday Tactics.

This sort of cheap politicking will only backfire. The resistance in the oil patch to a carbon tax comes from the suspicion that it is just a disguised National Energy Program—a way for eastern bastards to get their mitts on petro-profits. Insisting oil producers absorb the tax themselves only feeds that suspicion. In reality, because so much manufacturing sooner or later depends upon oil, higher fuel costs get passed along in the form of increased prices for a large basket of goods, not just for filling up the gas tank. Since the effect this tax will have on the world price of oil will be negligible, the carbon tax won't affect the oil industry in the slightest. But you won't hear that from the green lobby, since it is too busy pandering to its anti-capitalist constituency.

Nonsense from the left, nonsense from the right. In Canada, bad-faith economics is a bipartisan affair. Everyone sees politics as a zero-sum game in which there is no such thing as good policy, only winners and losers. Except there are real losers. They are called Canadians, considered either as private citizens or members of a commonwealth. M

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STORY OF THE WEEK—HOMEGROWN TERROR

Madrid. London. Toronto. Now Miami, where police last week arrested seven Muslim radicals who allegedly planned an attack "just as good or greater than 9/11." Alberto Gonzales, the U.S. attorney general, described the suspects as "homegrown terrorists," men "who for whatever reason came to view their home country as the enemy." Thankfully, Western authorities seem to be one step ahead of their al Qaeda citizens. Too bad Osama bin Laden doesn't live in Florida.

Good news

Librarian invasions

A crime surge in New Orleans spurred Gov. Kathleen Blanco to call in the National Guard last week. Heavily armed soldiers are now patrolling city neighbourhoods in an effort to restore order, but the uptick in mayhem hasn't dissuaded the American Library Association from holding its annual conference in the Big Easy. More than 18,000 professional bookworms are letting their hair down during the city's first big post-Katrina convention. The street punks better keep their voices down.

Pacific slim

A new health study out of the Pacific Northwest gave British Columbia top marks for its walkable cities, and found that its residents are half as fat and live 2.3 years longer than their American counterparts. This good news was offset somewhat by a report from a panel of Vancouver health experts warning that the province's children are dangerously overweight. One nutritionist labelled the fare in school vending machines "toxic." But North Vancouver is already taking action and will stock its school snack dispensers with healthier alternatives. Something for the rest of us to chew on.

Convenient truth

Cooler heads prevailed this week in the debate over global warming. First, the Liberals helped defeat a snap NDP motion demanding the resignation of Conservative Environment Minister Rona Ambrose. On the previous day, the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, an arms-length federal agency, announced that Canada can slash its greenhouse gas emissions by 60 per cent over the next 45 years through the use of existing technology, without damaging the economy. Things are already improving, the ageney says. Between 1990 and 2003, while Canada's industrial sector enjoyed 24 per cent economic growth, its greenhouse gas emissions increased by only 1.3 per cent.

Sponsored by...

Last week, convicted fraudster Chuck Guité was sentenced to 42 months behind bars—the harshest punishment yet in connection with the scandal-plagued sponsorship program. Though welcome news on its own, Guité's stiff sentence was accompanied by an even more encouraging promise from Crown prosecutor Jacques Dagenais. "This story isn't over," he said, referring to the RCMP's continuing investigation. "They are digging. They are finding bits and pieces and they're trying to reconstitute the whole skeleton. But it's not easy. It will take some time." We are more than willing to wait, if it means the political masterminds behind Guité's antics are finally called to account.

Bad news

Chinese charade

Three months ago, to the applause of human rights groups, Chinese authorities declared they were withdrawing the criminal case against Zhao Yan, a *New York Times* researcher accused of spilling state secrets. Turns out the announcement was nothing but a ruse to smooth U.S.-China relations in advance of President Hu Jintao's April visit to Washington. On June 16, the 44-year old journalist was escorted into a closed-door Beijing courtroom for a "trial" that lasted all of one day. A verdict is expected in the coming days. What are the odds on "guilty"?

Crowned

Guité aside, it was not a good week to be a Crown attorney. First, a judicial inquiry found that prosecutors in Newfoundland and Labrador have a severe case of "tunnel vision," contributing to at least three wrongful convictions. Then, the Ontario Court of Appeal heard that top federal justice officials never bothered to reveal that their own medical experts debunked key physical evidence used to convict Steven Truscott 50 years ago. In the U.S., meanwhile, a county prosecutor in Ohio has some serious groveling to do after he showed up 45 minutes late for a rape trial. The judge was so perturbed by his tardiness that she dismissed the case. The state is appealing.

Get your passport

A bare-knuckled congressional battle over illegal immigration from Mexico has tripped up efforts to postpone new rules that will require passports or special cards for all travellers across the U.S. border by Jan. 1, 2008—a deadline that is widely considered unworkable. An 18-month delay for the passport policy was incorporated into a sprawling immigration bill passed by the U.S. Senate. But the House leadership, outraged that the bill would allow undocumented workers to become citizens, has called summertime hearings that could slow the bill enough to kill it with the November elections.

The price of revelry

Keeping an eye on rowdy Oilers fans during the Stanley Cup playoffs cost Edmonton's police force $2.2 million—nearly double the original estimate. Even worse, city taxpayers don't get to pay for a victory parade. That's Carolina's problem.

Still no HBO...

Everyone is excited about the new Superman movie hitting theatres this week. But no one more so than the programmers at HBO, who are running the special *Superman Returns: HBO First Look* seven times in five days. Number of times Canadians will get to see this behind-the-scenes show? Zero. HBO is still not available in Canada. M

FACE OF THE WEEK



BLUE: Japanese soccer fans were ecstatic—until their team lost 4-1 to powerhouse Brazil, the defending World Cup champion

SHINYA HAGA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF JOSÉ THÉODORE

A few days before the Colorado Avalanche goalie was to pick up his three-month old daughter, Romi, who had been in hospital since birth, he popped up in Toronto, where he was photographed at the MuchMusic Video Awards with Paris Hilton. Afterward, according to witnesses, he was seen at several nightspots, holding hands with the heiress. The news didn't play well with Romi's mother, Stéphanie Cloutier, who promptly threw Théodore out of their Montreal home.



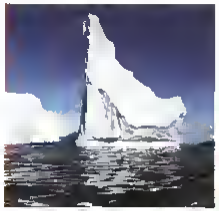
THE WEEK AHEAD...RUBLES AND RAPTORS

On Saturday, for the first time since 1917, the Russian ruble becomes a fully convertible currency, a symbol of the nation's emergence as a major energy exporter. To bolster the much maligned currency's reputation, parliament has passed a bill imposing fines on officials who speak in terms of dollars and euros. Meanwhile, at the annual NBA draft, Texas forward LaMarcus Aldridge and Italian player Andrea Bargnani will be among the favourites for the Toronto Raptors' first pick.

DISCOVERY

The anti-camera

An invention that "blinds" many digital cameras may defeat snooping photographers and video pirates. The prototype device searches for an intruding digital still or video camera's image sensor, which by its nature shines light back at the object it's recording. Once in its sights, the device floods the intruding camera with a blinding white light, bleaching out anything it tries to record. This anti camera could find use in cinemas to prevent film piracy, and in government buildings where photography is prohibited. However, it doesn't guard against conventional film cameras and digital SLRs.



OTHER oceans' levels are rising, so why isn't the Arctic's?

Robo flesh

Thanks to "nanosheets," robots are about to shed their image as metal men. Nanosheets are newly created materials than can cover a robot's sensing surface, giving it the same sensitivity as human touch. Formed by microscopic particles, the super-thin skin enables a robotic device to detect even slight changes in pressure on its surface. Its developers say the new material dramatically increases robotic sense of touch.

Bubble protection

Giant gas bubbles, 1,000 km wide, are popping near the earth and they're protecting us. Researchers say that the superheated gas bubbles, known as "density holes," appear at the outer edge of the earth's magnetic field, where they burst. They seem to boost the magnetic field's ability to push aside strong solar energy particles that could otherwise harm humans and electrical systems.

Falling sea levels

In the last 14 years, the earth's oceans have been rising an average of 3.2 mm a year. But a new interpretation of data from a decade of satellite radar altimetry has uncovered an astounding anomaly: sea levels in the Arctic have been falling an average 2 mm a year. Although scientists know that the oceans do not have a uniform height, the Anglo-Dutch team that found the anomaly has no explanation why Arctic sea levels are getting lower while others are rising. Seymour Laxon of University College London says, "The Arctic Ocean is the least understood body of water out there."

WILD KINGDOM

Rear guard

Killer whales love herring and will slap their mighty tails in the water to disorient their prey, but the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources has found that herring have their own tail-driven defence: clouds of bubbly flatulence that mask their escape. According to the institute's researcher, Malene Simon, when herring are in schools, a mass discharge of air from anal ducts could defeat whales' echolocation ability, allowing herring to escape. Says Simon in a new study: "Farting may save their lives."

Speed kills

As with all high-speed chases there are often casualties. For cheetahs, which sprint after prey at up to 100 km/h, the injury is often to themselves. Animal researchers are learning that collateral damage during hunts is more frequent than previously believed, including fatal lacerations to stomachs and injuries to eyes from fallen branches, thorns and spikes. And because increasing numbers of cheetahs are being taken from their habitat on grasslands and barracked in bushy game preserves, the injury frequency is rising.



WEAVER with Belle, the beagle with the life-saving nose

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: CORBIS; MAX TAYLOR/AP; JOE RAEDLE/GETTY; TIM [illegible]/OAKLAND CITY TIMES N.C.

Hero beagle

When Kevin Weaver of Ocoee, Fla., succumbed to a diabetic seizure, his pet beagle, Belle, saved his life. She had been trained to assess a potentially fatal attack by licking and sniffing Weaver's nose (with their super-sensitive sense of smell, dogs can actually detect blood-sugar levels in exhaled air). Then, even more remarkably, Belle seized Weaver's cellphone and bit on the number nine on the keypad. The phone had been programmed to dial 911 when the digit is entered. Emergency workers heard Belle bark and sent help. Last week, Belle received an award for saving Weaver's life.

MORTALITY

The perils of boys

When doctors at the Copenhagen Fertility Clinic noticed they were treating an inordinate number of women who'd suffered recurrent miscarriages following an earlier birth of a boy, they did some tabulating of 305 women who visited the clinic between 1986 and 2005. The results showed that in some women, giving birth to a boy causes a reaction that increases the risk of subsequent pregnancies ending in miscarriages. Researchers believe that women with multiple miscarriages after the birth of a boy may be experiencing extreme immune reactions to DNA in the male Y chromosome.

CHEETAH. New perils from prowling in bush country



Migraine pulse

A magnetic-pulse device originally developed to treat depression is being adapted for migraine therapy. Researchers say it holds the promise to stop migraines before they fully form. A one millisecond magnetic pulse delivered to the brains of sufferers during the earliest phase of classic migraines (the "aural stage," characterized by flashing jagged lights) was shown in a small study to provide immediate relief, reducing the magnitude of the headaches while producing no side effects.

Regrowing hearing

Tiny hairs that detect vibrations in the inner ear are crucial for hearing. But through damage or illness, the cells that host the hairs can die off, never to be replaced. Now, scientists at California's House Ear Institute are probing a genetic switch in mice to see if they can make previously irreversible hearing loss a thing of the past. They found that in mice, hearing hair cells stopped dividing as the animals matured, leading to the discovery of a gene governing hair cell division. If scientists can find a way to switch hair-cell division back on, it may be possible to repair permanent hearing loss.



TARGET PRACTICE. The only good squirrel is a painted squirrel

KIDS TODAY

Candy gloss

A cosmetic firm has teamed up with a food-brand company, Masterfoods, to produce a line of cosmetics. The Smackers Starburst Shower Collection is intended to appeal to teens and preteens familiar with the Starbust line of soft candies. The collaborators hope to use that brand recognition to further stoke already growing interest in preteen cosmetics. Masterfoods previously scored with a line of lip glosses flavoured with M&Ms.

Video beats trees

Will the next generation lose interest in the natural environment? A recent study that looks into the 25 per cent decline in U.S. national park visits since 1987 suggests they may, and the reason is what the study calls "videophilia," a passion for computer games, the Internet and other screen-based diversions. Says Steve McCormick, president of the Nature Conservancy, which sponsored the study, "When children choose TVs over trees, they lose touch with the physical world outside."

Petty theft

A quarter of Australian parents "borrow" money from their children's piggy banks to buy anything from bread to luxury holidays. Mothers are twice as likely to raid their kids' savings as fathers. Twenty per cent of those who take money from piggy banks use it to pay utility bills, while 16 per cent put the funds toward holidays and even new cars. Yet nine out of 10 parents polled say they believe they are good examples of household financial management.



WETZELL and Henzen were closer than they realized

IN OTHER NEWS

Green squirrels

Persistent rumours of Newfoundland paintball enthusiasts using squirrels for target practice goaded the volatile mayor of St. John's, Andy Wells, into action last week, demanding an investigation by the city's humane services. A resident claimed to have discovered brightly coloured dead rodents. There is no paintball range in St. John's, but Wells's action has brought complaints from Tom Davis, manager of Frontline Paintball in nearby Mount Pearl. Davis says there is no truth in the rumours and wants an apology from Wells.

Mother's here

Michelle Wetzell, who was adopted, recently went looking for her biological mother. The Davenport, Iowa, beautician wanted to send the mystery lady a complimentary manicure coupon as a friendly gesture. An application to officials returned the name Cathy Henzen, and the revelation came as a shock: Henzen had once worked with her at the very same hair salon. "There she was the whole time," Wetzell said of her mother, who had served as the salon's receptionist.

IN PASSING

Yitzhak Ben-Aharon, 99, pioneer of the Israel kibbutz movement. A self-proclaimed "radical socialist" and former MP, he often drew fire for his controversial opinions, including the view that the country had room "for the Arab masses." M

CAPITAL DIARY

PARIS, BELINDA, AND THE SPEAKER'S NAPKINS

OTTAWA OUTTAKES BY MITCHEL RAPHAEL



MP RUBY DHALLA and Ben Mulroney

IF PARIS WON'T COME TO OTTAWA . . .

All the cool MPs were at the 2006 MuchMusic Video Awards in Toronto, mingling with the likes of **Nelly Furtado**, tabloid fodder **Nick Lachey**, hip-hop star **Kardinal Offishall** and MuchMusic VJ search winner **Tim Deegan**. Ontario Liberal MP **Ruby Dhalla** was seen chatting with **Ben Mulroney**: was it a coincidence that just a few days earlier there had been rumours the Conservatives were trying to woo Dhalla over? **Jack Layton** and **Olivia Chow** were given their own **Ed the Sock** souvenir puppet from the knitted VJ himself, while Tory MPs **Rahim Jaffer** and **Helena Guergis**, Ottawa's same-party lovers, made the rounds. Jaffer, sporting a nice pink and white-striped blazer (which ended up with a splash of red on it), wanted to go to the after-parties, but Guergis kept saying she was way too tired. **Belinda Stronach** brought her teenage son, who managed to get his picture taken with **Paris Hilton**. It was nice to see Ms. Hilton put her phone down for a minute to pose.



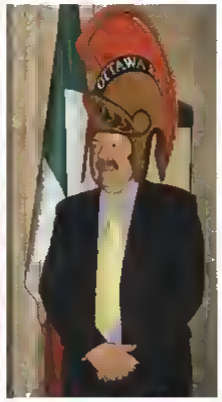
HELENA GUERGIS with VJ Tim Deegan

THE SPEAKER'S NEW NAPKINS

At the annual garden party at the Speaker's official residence, the Farm at Kingsmere, a large screen was put up in a massive white tent to show the final game of the Stanley Cup playoffs. The Speaker, Liberal MP **Peter Milliken** (Kingston and the Islands), told me he made the broadcast available out of a sense of duty and admitted he hadn't watched any of the previous six games. Nor did he really watch much of the last one. He learned the final score from the next day's papers. More importantly, new bilingual official Speaker's napkins were launched that evening: they are green with a gold-printed mace and gold lettering that says "The Speaker" and "Le Président." Milliken told me it took him five years to get through the white and gold ones from the previous speaker. MPs from all parties and media guests were offered tours of the Speaker's home, where they got to gawk at such historical items as the bed in which **Mackenzie King** died, not to mention the bottle of Tums in Milliken's bathroom, which, he says, he has had for years and have long expired. Noticeable among the Speaker's large collection of Canadiana DVDs was *Gladiator*, starring **Russell Crowe**. Now we know why Milliken loves watching MPs slaughter each other during Question Period.

PLEASE DON'T TELL GUINNESS

MPs had a reception on the Hill to say farewell to Irish ambassador **Martin Burke**, who has been in Canada for five years. "I have had a very enjoyable time partly because, if you look at the last census, three and a quarter million people put down Irish heritage," noted Burke. "So I found a warm welcome anywhere in Canada." He quickly became an "avid" fan of the Ottawa Senators and had a hoot at the Calgary Stampede. The ambassador proclaimed two Irish pubs in Ottawa up to snuff. D'Arcy McGee's, the watering hole where many MPs and parliamentary staff like to hang out, and the Heart & Crown. "I have favoured them with my patronage occasionally." He even ended up favouring local brew. "Canadian and Labatt Blue are quite good."



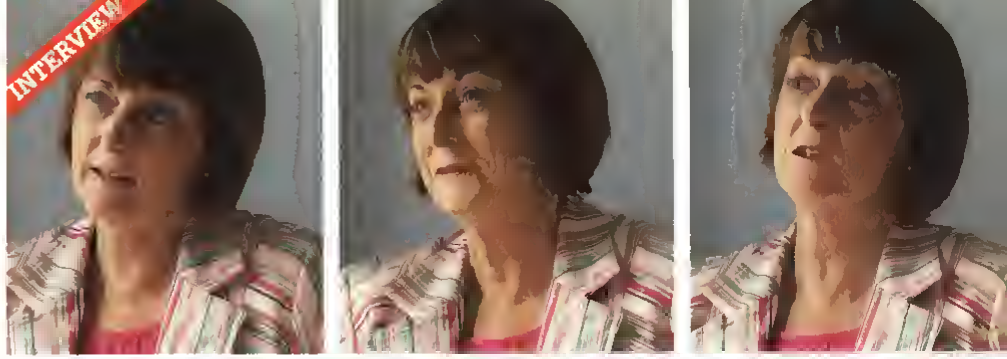
AMBASSADOR Martin Burke

RONA SNUBS DAVID

Rona Ambrose is taking a lot of heat these days, including an NDP motion last week for her resignation. When the **David Suzuki** Foundation recently held one of its tri-annual board meetings in the capital, there was a reception for Suzuki, but only two Liberals and several NDP MPs, including Leader **Jack Layton**, showed up. Ambrose, who Suzuki says was always a maybe, was a disappointing no show. But when she became environment minister she called the foundation and met with Suzuki. "She was as green as they come," says Suzuki, referring to her very basic environmental knowledge. "I talked and she listened." M



Mitchel Raphael can be contacted at mitchelraphael@attglobal.net



INTERVIEW

'This is not a very popular thing that I say, but as important as love is—and it's immensely important—it's not enough'

MARGARET SOMERVILLE TALKS TO BRIAN BETHUNE ABOUT THE RYERSON FIASCO, CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Australian-born Margaret Somerville is a professor of law and of medicine at McGill University in Montreal, and the founding director of the university's Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law. In two decades of work, the pioneering ethicist has staked out several positions that have stirred controversy, including her opposition to late-term abortion and infant circumcision. In June, it was Somerville's rejection of same-sex marriage that brought her a storm of protest—and a standing ovation—during convocation at Toronto's Ryerson University, when she was invested with her fifth honourary doctorate.

Q: *Philosophers have discussed ethics forever, but ethicist is a fairly new job. How did you come to it?*

A: The sort of ethics I do, there were only a few of us in the world in 1975 who went on to develop this new field. You could see that new medical science was evolving so quickly that the law just couldn't keep up with it. So we started to do ethics as an add-on to law. There were no rules, really, governing medical research using human subjects. Philosophers were still busy with how many angels on the head of a pin, and we were down in the trenches of the emergency rooms of hospitals saying, "Oh my God, can you use this new research treatment on this person without consent?" It was a totally different experience.

Q: *Your job is to tell people what to do?*

A: No, no, no. My job is to help people find as many as possible of the right questions—not to give the answers. It's for them to decide what they want as the answers. And one way I describe it is, when you've got a big ethics issue it's like having someone hand you a fan. The first thing you've got to work out is what are the struts of the fan, and those I see as being like the various schools of ethics or ways in which you can analyze ethics. And then the next thing you've got to look at is, have you got five different scenes on that fan or one big scene? If it's five different scenes, you're going to have to work out each one and see if you can accommodate all the values that should be respected in each.

Q: *How does this play out with same-sex marriage?*

A: You've got one scene—the adult scene—that tells you, "Of course same-sex couples should be treated the same as opposite-sex ones, with the same access to institutions, respect, protection for each other, claims on each other, etc." But when you go to the child scene and ask, "Do children have a right to have a mother and a father, preferably their own biological parents, and should that be our basic rule, and anything that varies from that we have to justify the variation, like we do with adoption when it's in the best interest of the child?" If you're going to give that to children, marriage is the institution that sets up those rights for children. It links biological children with their biological parents, when they're married at least. But it can't do that with same-sex because same-sex can't make a baby together, not yet. The problem is they're going to probably be able to do that in the future.

Q: *That's how you came to your position then, via children's rights, not gay rights?*

A: Yes, because I was looking at new reproductive technologies, and I believe very strongly that it is fundamentally wrong to create a child from two women or two men or from artificial gametes, and it's wrong to do it between a man and a woman without a natural ovum and a natural sperm. What's happening now is that the new science is going to let them make sperm or ova from stem cells. It would be just as wrong, in my view, for a man and a woman to do that as it is for two same-sex people.

Q: *But if the issue is children, what does marriage have to do with it, since there are many childless heterosexual marriages?*

A: That there are heterosexual childless marriages or infertile ones is not the point, because what you have to look at is not the individual couple, but what it means at the societal level in general. Marriage is a man and a woman: what does that symbolize, not in every case, but at the societal level? It's our basic presumption about how we transmit life to the next generation. After you choose your basic presumption, you say, "Well, if we can't achieve this, what are the exceptions that we will allow?" And when you allow exceptions you have to justify them. Adoption is the clearest example. If

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LIAM MALONEY

two people are going to have a baby, nobody goes and checks them out to see if they're going to be good parents and then stops them if they are not. But you don't give a baby to a couple unless they pass a huge investigation. The natural norm you allow to go forward. With exceptions, we as a society have obligations.

Q: *How would same-sex marriage change society's ability to enforce its obligations?*

A: Because gay couples can't naturally have a child, they have to seek assistance in doing so, and presently they're doing that through new reproductive technologies, which are provided by society and taxpayers' money and stuff, so that means we have to work out what is right for us to do. Once same-sex couples are married, it's very hard to say creating children is not the right thing to do, because marriage is actually a compound right, it's the right to marry *and* found a family. Children come with it. That's what it is in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it's what it is in the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. So then you have to say, "Well, is this the right thing to do to these kids?"

Q: *Your thinking has changed based on what you've heard from those children?*

A: I've been looking at this for about two years in my research, and I've read a huge amount of stuff by psychologists and by the children themselves. The one group of people who up until really just the last six months have not been heard from are the kids who've had the actual experience of not having a mother and a father. I've seen a couple of kids of same-sex couples who say they're really glad they've got two mummies or two daddies, but most of those kids have been quite young, usually somewhere around 10 to 14. All of the stuff that I've seen from the children who are now 20 to 25 years old is different. I might be getting a biased sample because these guys are sort of lobbying me, but what these kids tell you is, they feel that the people who've brought them into the world in this way were only thinking of their needs, their desires, what would make them happy. They didn't think about how the kid would feel.

Q. *But if you raise a child in a loving environment...*

A: This is not a very popular thing that I say, but as important as love is—and it's immensely important—it's not enough. There's more to us becoming fully human. It's what Kierkegaard calls the power of becoming oneself. You have to feel you've got authenticity and roots and connections in order to be able to use that power fully. These kids tell me things like, "I look at myself in the mirror and half of me is missing, and nobody had the right to do that to me." Another called it "a big, black void down below you."

Q: *There's no way to uncouple this issue from marriage?*

A: It's a big mistake to think marriage is really about two adults' public commitment to each other and a declaration of their love. It's really essentially about constructing a family. I know my views are very hurtful to some people who feel very strongly about this, and I regret having to hurt them. And I must admit it was not my original stance, which came much more from looking at the situation of gay people. I think they are a vulnerable group that has had horrible discrimination against them, and I can see that same-sex marriage, the inclusiveness of that, is one way that you could ensure that the discrimination stopped. So that, for me, is a big argument in favour of same-sex marriage. But then you look at another vulnerable group—children—and to protect them in a way that they should be protected, I think we can't have same-sex marriage. We can have civil unions, which I realize is not what gay people want, but I think it can stop discrimination, give them protections and rights they absolutely must have. That's the sort of thing we do in ethics when we've got two competing sets of values. You look for the least invasive, least restrictive alternative, one that's reasonably available and likely to be effective to achieve the goals you want. So that would be, for me, civil unions, and keep marriage as a man and a woman.

Q: *Did the Ryerson fiasco surprise you?*

A: I guess I only heard there was any problem three or four weeks before it happened, and then I got a lot of emails and such. Some of them were polite enough and some said I was a neo-Nazi, a hate-monger, that I was guilty of a hate crime—which actually is defamation—that I was probably in the Ku Klux Klan, that I was the new Ernst Zundel, and that it was very fortunate that I was Australian because they could pack me up and send me back to where I'd come from, just like they'd done with Zundel! So it was nice that one of my gay friends put on a dinner for me the night I came back from Ryerson.

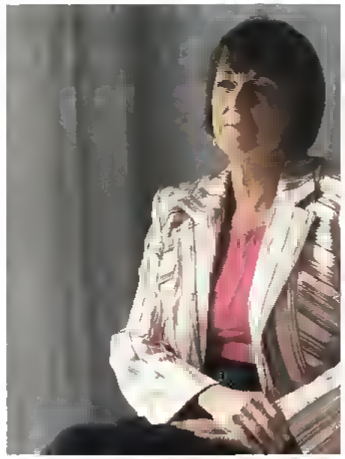
Q: *It must have bothered you.*

A: I've had worse. I wasn't too upset until I saw the memorandum that came out of Ryerson that said, literally, "Well, you know, if we'd known who she was and what she stood for we wouldn't have ever chosen her, but now it's too late, we're going to hold our nose and confer the degree."

Q: *Why did you accept after so clear an invitation to disinvite yourself?*

A: Well, I freaked out when I got it. I told my dean of law, "That's it, I'm not going. If they think they've *got* to give this to me I'm not going." But [Ryerson president Sheldon Levy] phoned me and said, "I just want to tell you, you are really welcome here." I gave him the benefit of the doubt. And I really was between a rock and a hard place, because I really believe in freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of association, and academic freedom. I'm glad I went, because of the response—an overwhelming standing ovation, and of the over 300 students I greeted as they got their degrees, only three showed any hostility.

Q: *Same-sex marriage has become the litmus test of acceptance of gay rights for many people. You don't accept that?*



'The one group who have not been heard from are kids who've had the experience of not having a mother and a father'

A: I know how hurt those feelings are. What I am is what I'm not allowed to be: pro-gay rights except for marriage—if you call that a gay right—and pro-children's rights. That's a category that, for gay activists, is simply not allowed to exist. So we're told there are only two choices: you're either pro-same-sex marriage and pro-gay rights, or you're anti-same sex marriage and homophobic. If I had to really choose between those, I'd choose pro-same-sex marriage, but I don't believe I have to choose that way. I believe that I can be pro-gay rights, and pro kids' rights. M

PHOTOGRAPH BY LIAM MALONEY

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WILL THIS WOMAN SAVE THE CBC?

Loyalists are outraged over the network's move to chase ratings with U.S.-style programs. Heritage Minister Bev Oda hasn't tipped her hand but she's asking some tough questions.

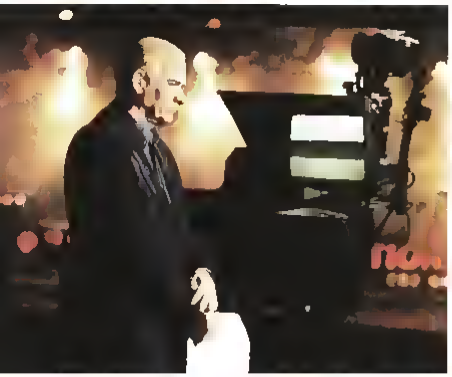
BY JOHN GEDDES



BEV ODA may hold the fate of the CBC in her hands

There are two ways Peter Mansbridge could still appear in his usual 10 p m time slot on Tuesday evenings this summer The CBC programmers who decided to bump *The National* newscast by an hour to make room for *The One. The Making of a Music Star* might change their minds in the face of the firestorm of criticism the move sparked Or Mansbridge could get some singing lessons from his pal Gord Downie, of the Tragically Hip, and audition for the imported U S talent show

That the CBC brass would expose their flagship newscast and its iconic anchor to that sort of easy joke—all for the sake of trying to grab reality TV ratings—set off howls of protest last week from those who regard the public broadcaster as a sacred trust. Strangely absent from the uproar, though, was the voice of the federal politician responsible for the CBC, Heritage Minister Bev Oda, who jumped into politics as a Conservative in 2004 after a three decade career mainly in private broadcasting



CBC's iconic anchor is being shunted for reality TV schlock

Oda's reluctance to get embroiled in the summer scheduling furor is in line with her cautious approach so far when it comes to the CBC Many had expected her to announce a sweeping rethink of CBC's mandate at the recent Banff World Television Festival But she put off that review, instead ordering a six-month Canadian Radio television and Telecommunications Commission study into how new technology is changing broadcasting Inside the CBC, the delay was greeted with sighs of relief, and Oda, despite her private-sector broadcasting background, began to be viewed by some CBC insiders as a benign figure—even a buffer against those Tories who are instinctively hostile toward Canada's biggest state-owned cultural institution

But in an interview with *Maclean's*, Oda left little doubt that she suspects the CBC's English TV service may have lost touch with what Canadians want it to be Although she declined to comment specifically on Mansbridge's news taking a back seat to reality TV schlock, Oda did express skepticism about the CBC trying to follow the lead of profit seeking networks, "If the CBC is going to provide service that's very similar to the commercial broadcasters, if they are providing programs that are very similar, people are going to ask the question, 'Why the use of public funds to deliver those services and programs?'" she said "It's a natural and very valid question to ask"

And a question that has rarely seemed more pressing CBC's English TV service is in the hands of a new triumvirate determined to fill its prime-time schedule with homegrown commercial hits At the helm is Richard Stursberg, who took over two years ago as executive vice-president of CBC English TV, after heading Telefilm, the federal film financer (The debate is almost all about English TV, and Oda echoed the widely held view that CBC's English radio and French services are basically healthy) Stursberg set out to find Canadian drama and comedy shows that can hold their own against the U.S. imports that dominate the peak viewing hours over at CTV and Global He recruited Fred Fuchs, formerly a producer in Francis Ford Coppola's movie company, as executive director of arts and entertainment, and Kirstine Layfield, a former executive at Toronto's Alliance Atlantis, as director of English-language programming

CBC TV IS UNABASHED ABOUT CHASING BIGGER, YOUNGER AUDIENCES. THEY KNOW THEY'RE NOT GOING TO DO IT WITH BALLET.

Coming from outside the CBC, Stursberg, Fuchs and Layfield are unabashed about chasing bigger, younger audiences They know they're not going to get them with ballet and documentaries This fall, they are betting heavily on new drama, including a series called *Rumours* that revolves around a women's magazine, and *Intelligence*, a police-vs-organized crime drama set in Vancouver As well, they are banking on *The Canadian One*, a planned made-in Canada spinoff of the U S show that's bumping Mansbridge for eight Tuesdays this summer Stursberg makes the case that he needs popular shows to earn advertising dollars only $275 million of the $550 million budget for CBC TV and News world comes from the federal government.

Hour-long weekly dramas featuring cops and glamour, serialized TV contests that showcase spunky talent—it might just work On the other hand, some or even all of the new shows might flop, or at least fall short of Stursberg's tough targets—including a goal of a million viewers per episode for drama, well above the numbers achieved by even highly regarded Canadian offerings in the recent past. (*This is Wonderland*, the courtroom drama that won three 2005 Gemini awards before it was cancelled last February, failed to attract more than 650,000 viewers) Pamela Brand, executive director and CEO of the Directors Guild of Canada, says demanding massive commercial success sounds laudably ambitious, but may be unrealistic. In the U.S., she says, about 20 shows are developed to produce just three ratings winners "It takes lots of misses before you get the hits," Brand notes "Unfortunately, there just isn't that kind of production money in Canada."

Even if Stursberg's fresh offerings beat the odds, traditionalists will argue the CBC is shredding its soul as a public broadcaster in the ratings quest Oda seems to be tuned in to that view of the CBC's true identity "The public comment has been that they believe advertising has caused the CBC to make decisions that make it look more like a commercial broadcaster, make it look for large audiences," she said. "The debate is, if it's a public broadcaster, is that the service Canadians want? Is that the service Canadians demand?" She was careful to comment in terms of how she understands public perceptions of the CBC—not on her personal view, much less the government's policy

Oda, 61, has a veteran insider's sensitivity to the tensions between public and private TV, and how closely anything she says will be studied by both camps She began her broadcasting career at TV Ontario in 1973, and later worked for Citytv and Global She served as a commissioner of the CRTC in the early 1990s, and later as a senior vice president at CTV, where she was viewed as an expert on regulation Despite her private network background, though, she is credited with having persuaded Stephen Harper not to take a hard line on the CBC in the last election campaign Since then she has settled in as an understated figure in cabinet, considered a moderate, notable for being the first Japanese Canadian MP.

'THE DEBATE IS, IF IT'S A PUBLIC BROADCASTER, IS THIS THE SERVICE CANADIANS WANT? IS IT THE SERVICE THEY DEMAND?'

Exactly when Oda will launch the expected CBC review, and how extensive it will be, isn't clear Her first priority is that CRTC study into technological change in broadcasting, which she expects to have in hand by December "In the interim, we will also be looking at how are we now going to consider the CBC," she said. Oda seems just as concerned about the economic health of private broadcasters, which she says are "struggling" under an outdated regulatory framework

From CBC's perspective, though, private TV looks robust enough, encroaching steadily into what were once CBC's strong suits Not only did CTV outbid CBC for the 2010 and 2012 Olympics, the long time face of CBC Olympic coverage, sportscaster Brian Williams, recently jumped to CTV too Speculation that CBC might lose NHL hockey abounds Even more fundamental is the CBC's loss of pre eminence in delivering nation-binding news According to Nielsen Media Research, CTV drew an average of 1 5 million viewers for its coverage of the Jan. 23 election, while CBC attracted 1 2 million viewers.

Even high quality Canadian drama and comedy have migrated, in part, up the dial to specialty channels, now the place to find shows like *Slings and Arrows* and *Trailer Park Boys* From 1997 to 2003, viewing numbers for Canadian drama on CBC and the conventional private networks fell to 2 7 million hours from 7 2 million. But on specialty and pay channels, viewing of Canadian drama rose over the same period to 13 9 million from 7 5 million hours, according to ratings figures analyzed by the directors guild

With Canadian storytelling, news reporting and sportscasting scattered across more stations, what's distinctive about the CBC is harder to isolate. Last week, a Senate committee urged it to wean itself off commercials, a radical change that would certainly separate it from the private pack But how would CBC make up the $400 million in foregone revenues across all its services, largely from ads, that now supplements its billion dollars in federal funding?

Oda's review might eventually sort out what the CBC should be and how to pay for it But her go slow approach suggests that it might not be completed until after the next election, which some expect to come next spring Until the review gets under way, critics of CBC's hit-seeking management can only rail on They might pause to reflect, though, on how the British government recently instructed even the venerable BBC to make being entertaining and popular a core aim Competition for viewers, after all, has never been stiffer. And the temptation to lure them with fun stuff—even if that means favouring the fake reality of a talent show over the real reality of newscast—has never been greater M

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER RIEGG/MACLEAN'S (LEFT); PHOTOGRAPH BY TOBIN GRIMSHAW (ABOVE)

SIXTEEN AND READY FOR SEX?

Raising the age of consent tries to make young teens off-limits

BY DAFNA IZENBERG • If legislation tabled last week by Justice Minister Vic Toews passes in the fall, Canada will have a new age of consent—with a new name. The "age of protection" would raise to 16 (from 14) the age at which teens can consent to sexual activity. Concerns about infringing on youths' rights and criminalizing teenage behaviour (a 2002 Health Canada study found over 50 per cent of Grade 9 students had engaged in "preliminary sexual activity" like kissing or touching, and almost a third had tried oral sex) have made the bill contentious, with one opponent describing supporters as "anti-sex." But there is absolute consensus among observers on one point: the need to protect young people from sexual exploitation. Where they differ is on how best to achieve this.

The government has included a "close in-age" exemption, allowing sexual activity between adolescents as young as 14 with peers less than five years older. Still, critics are concerned that adolescents' unique circumstances and varying developmental needs could be overlooked under the new legislation. "When we deal with arbitrary cut offs, we lose the flexibility to apply the law in a much more specific and individualized kind of way," says Peter Dudding, executive director of the Child Welfare League of Canada.

The CWLC supported amendments to the Criminal Code last year allowing consent of a person under 18 to be nullified if a judge determines the person was exploited. Dudding says with proper implementation, these amendments could provide the necessary protection while capturing the complexities of child development and human relationships. But John Muise, a 30-year veteran police officer and currently with the Canadian Centre of Abuse Awareness, says they remain subjective. "There's nothing subjective about 16," he states.

Many age-of-consent skeptics see education—health information, self-esteem, and negotiating skills—as the key to helping youth stay safe. And Pearl Rimer of the Toronto Child Abuse Centre points out that, at a minimum, Canadians need to learn about the law. Many people do not know Canada's age of consent, or that it refers to all forms of sexual activity, not just intercourse.

Maureen Reid of the Children's Aid Society of London/Middlesex sees the new law as an opportunity to create stigma around sexualizing children. "If we start to think



UNDER THE NEW law peers are exempt

about 14-year olds as too young to have a relationship with an adult, that's going to impact a certain percentage of our community because they won't be able to point to the Criminal Code and say, 'Well, hey, it's legal.'" Many advocates of raising the cut off believe 14-year-olds are simply more vulnerable than 16-year olds, particularly with the proliferation of child pornography on the Internet and an adversarial criminal justice system.

Reid has seen very vulnerable youth turn to exploitive relationships for survival, but even teens with multiple resources are susceptible to intense feelings early in adolescence, a time when the need for adult attention is as strong as emerging sexual feelings. "Do you remember being 14?" says Reid. "It's a powerful time in your life." M

FOR THE RECORD

JOHN BAIRD SEES THE LIGHT, GETS CONFUSED

"Every member in the House will soon have an opportunity to stand up and be counted on accountability. Let us replace darkness with light. Let us replace accountability with corruption. Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order to correct the record. I should have said, let us move to accountability from corruption."—President of the Treasury Board John Baird misspeaking in the Commons on the Federal Accountability Act.

Drying out the fire hall

A booze-peddling fire chief quits when the mayor shuts him down

BY NICHOLAS KÖHLER • Not long ago, Robert Elliott, the mayor of Point Leamington, Nfld., called a meeting with the town's volunteer firemen. Days earlier, the fire chief, Frazer Stuckless, and three of his lieutenants had resigned in a snit over a new town policy forbidding the sale of alcohol at the fire hall, which for decades had doubled as a speakeasy. Elliott, who spearheaded the anti-booze policy for insurance reasons and who met with the rank-and-file firemen to clear the air, is a retired schoolteacher. Casting his eye about the room, Elliott, 59, knew all of them from his classroom. "They're good kids," he says.

It's that kind of place, Point Leamington—a small logging community on Newfoundland's northeast coast. Residents call it paradise: the river through town teems in spring with spawn-driven salmon (townsfolk say they stay within their fishing limits). There's rough history, too. Back in 1959, when the mill still ran, union unrest left a policeman dead. And, until recently, you could pop by the fire hall, throw some darts and buy a beer (years ago, a fire chief actually arrived at a blaze sauced). Now the hall's dry. And while residents won't say so publicly, most believe it's a good idea.

It took a while. The issue dogged the town for decades—mayors dispatched countless cease and desist letters, to no avail. Past owners of the town's only licensed drinking establishment also sparred with one chief, upset by the unlicensed competition. When firemen threatened a boycott, the owners sold (the current proprietor wouldn't speak with *Maclean's*). Finally, in early June, Elliott seized the beer. Chief Stuckless, who also declined comment, quit—taking his assistant, his secretary and the treasurer with him.

Though the rank-and-file firemen promised Elliott they'd respond to calls, none would take a leadership role. Things were a mess. Worse, media from the mainland kept calling. "It makes everybody look like clowns," one Newfoundland fire chief told the Canadian Press. Last week, in desperation, Elliott called another powwow—and arrived at an agreement with Stuckless. The anti-beer policy remains—but will be reviewed this fall. Stuckless and his men are back. Says Elliott: "We're trying to cool the rhetoric and get on with our lives." M

MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES



A PRISONER'S DESPERATE HOPE, AND BRAVE WORDS

EXCLUSIVE

Maclean's reveals a scholar's work, as efforts to free him stall

BY LUIZA CH. SAVAGE • Two months have passed since the Iranian-Canadian philosopher Ramin Jahanbegloo was locked in Tehran's notorious Evin prison, where Canadian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi was beaten to death in 2003. And Canada is making so little headway in securing his release that his advocates are turning to India, Bangladesh and Tibet for help.

The 46-year old has still not been formally charged but is under relentless interrogation, in what his friends fear is an effort to force a confession to espionage or sedition, a notion they consider outlandish given his philosophy of non-violence and dialogue. Jahanbegloo's Iranian architect wife, Azin, has been granted two brief visits, both in the presence of interrogators. "He is in poor shape and has lost a lot of weight," she told the Inter Press Service news agency. "Even more painful for me and our 10 month old child is the uncertainty over how long he will be away. We live in desperate hope day after day. The authorities say they haven't yet completed their 'investigations.' Until that happens, he can't even see a lawyer."

Jahanbegloo taught at the University of Toronto and Harvard before returning to his homeland in 2002, where he frequently hosted foreign intellectuals. His "contacts with foreigners" have been given as a reason for his arrest. Canada's efforts to see him or get him a lawyer have been rebuffed. "The authorities are refusing us access," said Foreign Affairs spokesperson Marie-Christine Lilkoff. Canadian diplomats are still in contact with Iranian officials, and are "discussing the case with like-minded countries," she said.

"The Canadian ambassador doesn't have great access," says family friend Karim Sadjadpour, an analyst for the International Crisis Group, a non-governmental organization. "Among some elements of the regime, Canada is perceived as enemy No. 1, and a country that can be scorned without fear of repercussion." Iran does not recognize dual citizenship, and Canada's interest in Kazemi's case was seen as an effort to embarrass the regime. "Even the beating death of an innocent photographer they can turn on its head and project themselves as a victim," said Sadjadpour. To succeed, Canada must involve non-Western, Muslim countries, he added. But that does not mean Canada should back down, says another friend, Victoria Tahmasebi, who teaches at York University and U of T. "How many murders do we need to have before we take action?" she asked. "At least they could call back the ambassador, take the case to an international level. They must show us that we are accorded every protection possible as Canadian citizens."



JAHANBEGLOO in front of the former American embassy in Tehran: 'nothing conspiratorial'

Canadian-Iranian relations took another nasty turn last week when Iran sent a delegation to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva headed by Tehran prosecutor Gen Saeed Mortazavi, who was responsible for Kazemi's arrest and detention. Foreign Minister Peter MacKay said he was "disgusted" by his presence, which demonstrated Iran's "complete contempt" for human rights.

And then MacKay tried to have Mortazavi arrested. "I spoke to the German foreign ministry about the possibility, under their law or international convention, of detaining Mr. Mortazavi," MacKay told reporters in Quebec City. The Iranian prosecutor would have claimed diplomatic immunity if Canada had moved against him in Geneva, MacKay said, but a stop in Frankfurt might have offered a chance to nab him. In the end, Mortazavi didn't stop on German soil. "But mark my words," MacKay said. "This individual is on notice. If there is any way Canada can bring this person to justice, we'll do it."

The campaign to free Jahanbegloo is now centring on India. Before his arrest at Tehran's airport, Jahanbegloo was teaching at the Center for the Study of Developing Societies in Delhi, and was organizing two Indo-Iranian conferences. The center's faculty has written to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and met with Iran's ambassador to India. There has been no formal response. "When we talked to them they said, 'We don't want to take a harsh view of it. We are aware of his contribution as an intellectual.' But it's double-talk because at the same time they talk about the security interests of the Iranian state. To which I say everything he has done has been in the public domain. There is nothing secretive and nothing conspiratorial about Ramin Jahanbegloo," said the coordinator of the centre's efforts, Suresh Sharma, who is now mobilizing colleagues in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Tibet.

Jahanbeloo's cause got a boost last week from a petition signed by nearly 100 Arabs and Muslims, including a former Iraqi human rights minister, a Jordanian member of parliament, and dozens of Palestinians, Lebanese, Syrians, Saudis, and Egyptians. But there is resistance among some of those who could have the greatest sway on Tehran—Muslim scholars. "Some people are reluctant to publicize human rights in Iran when Iran is facing pressure on the nuclear issues," said Mansour Bonakdarian, who teaches history at Hofstra University. "They are afraid that too much discussion of human rights in Iran could be exploited by the U.S. and its allies."

NEWSHA TAVAKOLIAN/POLARIS/KLIXPIX

THE OFFENDING ARTICLES

IN HIS OWN WORDS

Ramin Jahanbegloo was arrested on April 27, and locked up in the notorious Evin prison. He has not been charged, but Iran's minister of intelligence has said he was picked up because of "relations with foreigners." His friends say no one is sure exactly what motivated the arrest. His work in other countries was well known. he has studied and worked at the Sorbonne, the University of Toronto and the National Endowment for Democracy in Washington. But some have linked the arrest to two articles he wrote for Spain's El Pais *newspaper, one on his 2004 visit to Auschwitz (which appeared soon after President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad pronounced the Holocaust a "myth"), and one on the intellectual climate in Iran. Both are reprinted here.*

AN ASSEMBLY LINE OF MORTAL DESTRUCTION

Auschwitz is a name well known in Iran. Most of the Iranian literati have heard about this place and clearly understand that it is an infamous location. But not too many Iranians feel the historical necessity to visit there. Not even those who travel to Poland for educational or business purposes wish to return to Iran having had a personal experience with Auschwitz. I visited Auschwitz in February 2004, having the opportunity to travel to Poland to speak with various Polish intellectuals and artists in preparation of a special edition for an Iranian magazine. It was a cold afternoon and I was one of the last visitors at the camp. I was horrified by the idea of what I would be seeing on the outskirts of the Polish city of Oswięcim.

As the taxi approached the extermination camp, a single railway line stretched before me, ending at a red brick building—the terminal of the Auschwitz-Birkenau line constructed in the spring of 1944. There were barbed-wire and brick barricades as far as the eye could see. The crematoriums in ruins were all around, all covered with a blanket of snow. Visiting Auschwitz under the recently fallen snow emphasized the reality of this barbaric creation produced by modern rational minds.

The main objective of the Auschwitz camp was to destroy men, women and children whose only crime was that they were Jewish. They had been transported from Greece, Hungary, France, Belgium, Holland and Poland to be killed in the gas chambers and reduced to ashes, their gold teeth, hair and clothing were recycled and converted into raw materials for the Nazi war machine. Many years later I was reading the memoirs of several survivors, such as *If This is a Man* by Primo Levi and *Night* by Elie Wiesel, but it goes without saying that experiencing directly the horror of the extermination camp is something that overwhelms the imagination. To visit Auschwitz is like visiting no other prisoner camp or torture chamber in the world. The terrifying expression of cruelty and human insanity of the other two locations would most certainly shock anyone. What puts Auschwitz in a place of its own is not only the horrible imprint from witnessing this assembly line of mortal destruction, but especially the bitter aftertaste and nausea toward humanity that remains hours, days and months afterward.

In reality, the most important lesson that can be learned from a visit to Auschwitz is not that the Holocaust was merely a tragic event in Jewish history, but rather it was a challenge to the very existence of man. Auschwitz was an unprecedented occurrence, not just an ordinary crime based on the assassination of millions of human beings. Auschwitz is a moral failure and an aberration of the very foundations of civilization, because it is the unlimited degradation and destruction of the human condition. From a moral point of view, no one is innocent by not knowing what happened in the gas chambers of Auschwitz, not even those who voluntarily turned a blind eye to the real nature of the horror. Auschwitz is no accident or error in history; it is a trauma for all human civilization. Putting Auschwitz to words with any certainty is an impossible task for poets, philosophers and politicians. Given that with Auschwitz the impossible became the possible, nothing more remains impossible. Let us not forget what Paul Celan said about words following Auschwitz: "It, the language, remained, not lost, yes, in spite of everything. But it had to pass through its own answerlessness, pass through frightful muting, pass through the thousand darknesses of deathbringing speech. It passed through and gave back no words for that which happened, yet it passed through this happening. Passed through and could come to light again, 'enriched' by all this." Without a doubt, Auschwitz is an indescribable occurrence of inhumanity, but today it is our responsibility to bear witness to Auschwitz and the indescribable, imposing limits on the human condition.

—Jan. 28, 2006



IN A BARE Tehran cafe, girls talk over tea and cigarettes



'A BITTER aftertaste and nausea towards humanity remains'

JEROEN OERLEMANS/PA (TOP); ANDY LAUWERS/REX FEATURES

'THE REAL PROBLEM IS WHO WE ARE'

As might be expected, the dialogue between Europe and Iran has in all practicality reached a standstill, and the European Union has joined with the United States in its decision to relegate the Iranian question to the UN for the possible enforcement of sanctions. However, what the European media as well as media from other countries across the globe generally omit in their coverage is the fact that Iranian society comprises multiple facets. Iran is a juxtaposition of paradoxes and contradictions. The country is located in the heart of the Near East and yet its population is not Arab. This is a country that is rich, yet underdeveloped, that has been exploited excessively but never colonized. It is a civilization based on an ethnic mosaic, just like India, except that its nationalism is cohesive. And last, but not least, Iran is one of the few Muslim countries where you can find a vital, active civilian society.

Today in Iran, civilian society is the subject of intense debate. The key players in

Iranian civilian society are concerned with the structures that bridge the government and its citizens, they are equally important, as were the members of civilian society in Poland and Czechoslovakia during the Communist regime. In modern Iran, civilian society does not mean having a market economy that is independent from the state. Civilian society



AYATOLLAH Khomenei portrait presides over a mosque

is an alternative sphere of citizenry that clings to the promise of individual autonomy that transcends political and religious sectarian attitudes. Beyond being merely a "volunteer" or "charitable" sector, Iranian civilian society is an "ethnic sector." It requires a constant effort for citizens to express themselves as individuals rather than just belonging to a society founded on theological and political premises. Because of their role in giving meaning to that promise, the moral responsibility of individual members in Iranian civilian society is greater than in any other historical period.

Over the last 15 years, the role of intellectuals has been crucial in breathing fresh air into Iran's civilian society. Whereas the revolutionary intellectuals in the late 1970s and early 1980s were not successful in offering alternative ideological platforms to the key discourse of the Iranian revolution, the so-called religious intellectuals of the '90s tried to redefine the long-standing clash between modernity and tradition. In reality, the religious intellectuals are divided into two groups: reformists and neo-conservatives. The reformist faction is represented by names like Abdolkarim Soroush, Mohsen Kadivar, [Mohammad] Mojtahed Shabestari and others. The unifying features of this group include its recognition of the need for reform of Islamic thought, democracy, civilian society and religious pluralism, and its opposition to the absolute supremacy of the *faqih* (supreme spiritual leader). The proliferation of the religious intellectual faction can be followed through the writings of Soroush. He maintains that certain unalterable religious truths do exist, but our perception of them depends on our scope of scientific and philosophical knowledge. He speaks of the possibility of an "Islamic democracy." According to Soroush, the role of the philosopher is to reconcile religion and freedom. He accentuates the existence of two religious concepts: the maximalist and the minimalist.

From the maximalist perspective, everything derives from religion, and the majority of the problems currently experienced in Islam arise from this vision. The minimalist vision implies that certain values, such as respect for human rights, are not founded on religion. In Soroush's opinion, the minimalist concept must prevail, or the balance between Islam and democracy will not be possible.

Mojtahed Shabestari is one of Iran's religious intellectuals who barely question the singular vision of Islam. According to him, the official debate on Islam in Iran has triggered a double crisis. The first is due to the belief that Islam encompasses a political and economic system that offers solutions that are pertinent for all historical periods; the second implies the conviction that the government must apply Islamic law to the letter. In contrast to the reformist intellectual platform, the neo-conservatives are in favour of the pre eminence of the supreme spiritual leader, the *faqih*, and against concepts such as democracy, civilian society and pluralism. Between these two extremes we find Reza Davari Ardakani, Qolam-Ali Hadad Adel and Mehdi Golshani. Reza Davari Ardakani, although an anti Western philosopher, is familiar with the works of Martin Heidegger. He adopts Heidegger's criticism of modernity and couches it in Islamic terms. He rejects the Western model for democracy based on the separation of politics and religion. Davari Ardakani may be considered as the philosophical spokesperson of the Islamic regime.

'EVERYTHING DERIVES FROM RELIGION, AND THE PROBLEMS IN ISLAM ARISE FROM THIS VISION'

The reformist and neo conservative intellectuals do not dominate the entire Iranian public sphere. There exists a new generation Intellectual non-religious post-revolutionaries such as [Seyyed] Javad Tabatabai, Babak Ahmadi, and others may be defined as "debating intellectuals," in contrast to the revolutionary intellectuals of the seventies and eighties. The importance invested in the notion that truth should be reflected in the power of the constitution as proposed by the new Iranian intelligentsia reveals the affinity of this younger generation for the ideal of value-pluralism. This value pluralism questions the stance that the West is the "opponent." These thinkers of Iranian civilian society believe that the political and intellectual relationship between Iran and the rest of the world requires urgent cultural interaction between the two sides. By helping to maintain this dialogue with modernity and Western civilization, the new generation of intellectuals rises above the blackmail position of having to be "for or against the West."

Being for or against the West is no longer the issue. The real problem is who we are. And we cannot respond to this question without acknowledging our role as citizen of the world. Therefore, the notion of civil responsibility is the key issue in Iranian civilian society. Seventeen years following the Iranian revolution, the main concern of this civilian society no longer consists of choosing between morality and politics, but rather in determining how to forge a political system based on civil responsibility, without which, you are left with the politics of hypocrisy. M

—April 20, 2006

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(www.elpais.es)



SOROUSH is a reformer who 'speaks of the possibility of an 'islamic democracy'

TRYGVE BOLSTAD/PANOS (TOP)

ON THE WEB

To read our original article on Ramin Jahanbegloo, visit www.macleans.ca/ramin

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1. Risk Factors – Cholesterol. Heart and Stroke Foundation. 9/22/2001
2. Statistics Canada. Causes of Death 2002

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NEW RULE Militia from the Islamic Courts Union patrol the streets just north of the Somali capital

The calm before the next storm

Islamic militants have seized Mogadishu. The U.S. is watching.

BY MICHAEL PETROU • In the seven years since Ahmed Abdisalam Adan left his home in Ottawa and moved back to the country of his birth, Somalia, to work as a radio journalist, he has been shot at, had bombs thrown at him, seen his radio station stormed by gunmen, and lived through the murders of several colleagues. "These are all ups and downs," the director of programs for HornAfrik Media says with genuine nonchalance. It's what happens when you live in Mogadishu, one of the most chaotic and dangerous cities in the world—the capital of a country with no effective government and virtually no order beyond warlords and local strongmen.

This month, however, a sense of calm has returned to the city for the first time in years. Islamic militias loyal to a coalition calling itself the Islamic Courts Union seized Mogadishu in a fierce battle three weeks ago. They have since taken over much of southern Somalia. In areas under their control, the courts have banished gun-toting militiamen loyal to various warlords. But some of the courts are also imposing a strict interpretation of Islam on the populace. Women are pressured to wear veils, and at least one makeshift cinema showing World Cup soccer matches was forced to close.

Adan has mixed feelings about the changes. In the chaos that was Mogadishu, the courts established a power base over the last two years before the city was finally taken over. Adan had problems with them. Islamic gunmen jailed one of his journalists because they objected to his coverage, and the courts once issued a *fatwa* to close his radio station because it had interviewed people upset about Islamists shutting down cinemas showing Western movies. "They were angry that we were not working with them to purify the city," Adan says. But he also appreciates the relative peace, and says the courts have a lot of support among Somalis—not necessarily because of their Islamic agenda, but because they have been able to bring security to places where anarchy reigned. "There has been a long conflict here. People have suffered tremendously from lawlessness and lack of infrastructure. And in many cases, the Islamic courts have offered the only viable local security in some parts of the city."

But this may be the lull before a much bigger storm. The United States has long feared that Somalia is becoming a safe haven for al-Qaeda and similar terror groups. It believes that some of these were instrumental in the 1998 terrorist attacks against U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, and the 2002 attacks against Israeli targets in Kenya. It believes three of these men are now in Somalia. Other extremist networks are also active in the country. Foremost among these is one led by a young Mogadishu man named Aden Hashi Ayro, who was reportedly in Afghanistan during the U.S. invasion. His network has been implicated in the assassinations of foreign aid workers and Somali police. Last year, his militia occupied an old Italian cemetery, dug up the bodies and dumped their bones at the airport. The cemetery is now a heavily fortified compound, and Somalis have said they have seen men from Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Pakistan directing military training inside, although Adan's journalists haven't found any foreign fighters in the city's hospitals.

U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was sufficiently worried about terrorist networks in Somalia that he instructed commanders to draw up plans for military action there after Sept. 11. But the U.S. has thus far avoided direct intervention. In 1993, 18 American troops were killed in a Mogadishu battle, and the U.S. has been reluctant to return in force. Instead, it established a base next door in Djibouti. Now, U.S. agents are active in the region, and residents of Mogadishu report unidentified surveillance flights over their city. According to a July 2005 report by the International Crisis Group, a dirty war is underway. "[I]n the ruined capital, al Qaeda operatives, jihadi extremists, Ethiopian security services and Western-backed counterterrorism networks are engaged in a shadowy and complex contest waged by intimidation, abduction and assassination."

The U.S. has so far had some success with these methods. But fighting an unconventional war depends on local allies, and these appear to be drying up. The warlords driven out of Mogadishu are widely believed to have been funded by the United States. The Islamic courts are not a monolithic body and contain moderate elements who have sought to reassure the United States, but they are unlikely to be co-operative in its war on terror. The U.S. has asked the courts to turn over the three al Qaeda men it says were involved in the 1998 attacks. But the courts deny they are sheltering foreign terrorists.

This leaves Washington with few options. According to Thomas Dempsey, the director of African studies at the U.S. Army War College, military strikes in failed states are risky because of the lack of co-operation that an invading force can expect from locals immersed in criminal violence and social disintegration. The best outcome for the U.S. would be a functional Somali government that agreed to crack down on terror networks in the country. The weak interim government and the Islamic Courts Union are in the midst of peace talks, so there is a possibility that some semblance of order might return. But the situation is perilous, and there is no guarantee that peace will hold.

"We really are at a crucial junction," says Ken Menkhaus, a Somalia expert at Davidson College in North Carolina. He was in Somalia in May, and notes that the Islamists have pushed toward the border of Ethiopia, knowing that such a move will antagonize a neighbour that views Somali extremists as a threat to its own security. Should hostilities in Somalia resume, Menkhaus says, there is a real possibility that Ethiopian forces might get involved—as they have in the past.

If this happens, "the jihadis will get their jihad, and we're going to have a very, very nasty, potentially catastrophic situation in Somalia," Menkhaus says. "That would radicalize the Islamist movement, embolden the hardliners and marginalize the moderates. Now you have what was initially just a local power struggle turning into an international one." M

'IN MANY CASES, THE ISLAMIC COURTS HAVE OFFERED THE ONLY VIABLE SECURITY IN THE CITY'

KAREL PRINSLOO/AP (TOP); SHEBELLE MEDIA/REUTERS



A SWEDISH camaraman was shot during a pro-Islamist demonstration last week

KAREL PRINSLOO/AP



SHEIKH Sharif Shaikh Ahmad, chairman of the Islamic Courts Union, briefs the media

WHAT'S ON THEIR MIND

When Harper and Bush meet next week, the agenda won't be ours

BY LUIZA CH. SAVAGE • Canadians can recite in their sleep the bilateral issues they'd like to resolve with the United States: from softwood lumber to keeping the border open for beef and tourists. These classics, along with concerns over Afghanistan, Haiti, Sudan and homegrown terrorism are likely to dominate the conversation when Prime Minister Stephen Harper meets with President George W. Bush in Washington next week. The American ambassador to Ottawa, David Wilkins, says much is going well. "There has been generally terrific co-operation on foreign relations," he told *Maclean's* last week, adding that Bush has thanked Canada for strong and decisive action on the alleged terrorist cell in Ontario.

SOFTWOOD AND THE BORDER ARE NO BRAINERS. BUT MOVIE PIRACY? COLOMBIAN NARCO-TRAFFICKING?

Likewise, Canada is earning plaudits on Capitol Hill for its military effort in Afghanistan and its work in stabilizing Haiti. There have been congressional resolutions passed thanking Canada, and a new "Friends of Canada" caucus created to focus on shared concerns.

But just as many Americans have never heard of softwood lumber, there are issues of concern to U.S. lawmakers that get little attention here. And since Congress has the power to resolve at least one Canadian priority—extending a potentially disastrous January 2008 deadline by which all travellers crossing the land-border will have to show a passport or equivalent—paying attention to congressional concerns and pet issues, and seeking out avenues for co-operation, couldn't hurt.

Take movie piracy. Canada has the dubious distinction of being named on a six-country "watch list" of the worst copyright offenders by the International Anti-Piracy Caucus of the U.S. Congress. That puts us alongside China, Russia, India, Mexico and Malaysia in enabling activities that the group said costs U.S. industry some $4 billion a year. American lawmakers have asked that Canada crack down on sales of camcorder bootlegs of movies and pirated software, and mount a "coordinated national program" to stop counterfeit goods from entering Canada from abroad. A Liberal bill to do so died with the last election, and the Tories are still working on their own. One of those spearheading the effort in the U.S. is Republican congressman Bob Goodlatte, who happens to chair the House committee on agriculture which handles such issues as the beef trade and softwood lumber. Wilkins says his people are working on resolving the issue, but it remains "under the radar screen and doesn't get talked about."

Likewise, the Colombian drug trade is hardly top of mind in Canada. Yet when ambassador Michael Wilson appeared before the House subcommittee on the western hemisphere last month seeking support in delaying the passport requirement, he received fewer questions on that issue than on what Canada was doing to promote alternative crops and stop narco-trafficking, which one committee member called "the biggest threat to democracy in this hemisphere." Wilson appeared caught off guard by the line of questioning, said he was unsure of the details beyond Canada's financial support for the peace process in Colombia, and told the questioners, "I'll get back to you on that." He later sent a letter with details.

Another issue moving to the top of the American agenda is North Korea, particularly after satellite imagery raised the possibility it is preparing to test a long-range missile that could reach the United States. The news reportedly spurred the Pentagon to activate the operational component of its missile defence shield. But in this case, Wilkins says he does not expect Canada to be asked to participate in the shield program, which the Martin government pointedly rejected. "I'm not aware of anything on the table," he said. M

THE ISSUE IN...

AUSTRALIA

BONUS PROMPTS LABOUR SLOWDOWN

Pregnant women in Australia are gritting their teeth and holding out for July 1, the day when baby-bonus payments will increase by a third. The government of Prime Minister John Howard introduced the plan in 2004 with a $2,500 payment, intended to reverse the nation's low birth rate. At the time, 700 women delayed birth of their children to cash in. Now Canberra is upping the bonus to $3,250, and a similar anxious vigil is expected.

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CIDA GOES FOR THE GOLD

Is the aid agency helping the poor—or our mining companies?

BY COLIN CAMPBELL • These are boom times for gold miners in Colombia. President Alvaro Uribe, a hardline conservative, was re-elected last month, bucking Latin America's leftist trend and clamping down on rebels that once made mining exploration too dangerous. Gold prices have been high, and the country, with its vast untapped resources, is wide open to foreign investment. Last month, AngloGold Ashanti Ltd., the world's third-largest gold miner, partnered with Canada's Bema Gold Corp. to begin exploring in Colombia—the first major producer to enter that country in decades and a sign, many say, of things to come. "I started to look in 2002, and by 2003, 2004, it was pretty clear this was going to be a changed location for investment," says Ian Park, a consulting geologist for Colombia Goldfields Ltd., a U.S.-based gold exploration company operating in Colombia, but run by a group of Canadians. And while companies credit Uribe for this change, they also point to a new, liberalized mining code encouraging foreign investment, that was in part drawn up—controversially—by Canada's foreign aid arm, the Canadian International Development Agency, in 2001.

Mining companies love the new environment, and Colombia is no longer the mining world's Wild West. Vancouver-based Greystar Resources Ltd. returned to the South American country in 2003, after pulling out in the late '90s, and this year alone plans to spend $14 million on advanced exploration in the country. "All in all, we are seeing a much greater level of investment and it's been growing more so every year since 2004," says Greystar vice-president Frederick Felder, reached at his company's office in Bucaramanga, Colombia. But indigenous and labour groups across Colombia—while acknowledging that foreign investment brings wealth, say the new code has been a major step backwards. "These policies have been a disaster with respect to our sovereignty over our natural resources," says Francisco Ramirez, the head of Colombia's energy workers union.

CIDA certainly isn't gloating—far from it. Within the agency, the mining code project elicits a chilly response (the agency refused repeated requests over a two-week period for an interview). In recent years, CIDA has come under harsh criticism for its *realpolitik* tinkering with Colombia's mining laws (some would call the process "Canadianizing"), which helped create a more competitive tax and royalty structure for foreign companies. Why, other aid groups ask, was CIDA, a publicly funded humanitarian organization, promoting outside investment to the benefit of mining companies? And local groups complain that the laws were ultimately drawn up and passed without their input—although they had been promised a voice—stripping away earlier provisions that protected their land rights. "Just as the Canadian government has given money to 'reform' Colombia's laws to favour North American companies, they should now provide money to return the laws to their previous state so that our sovereignty over our natural resources can be respected," Ramirez says.

CIDA embarked on the wide-ranging $11-million project in 1997, in partnership with the Calgary-based Canadian Energy Research Institute, an energy industry think-tank representing about 100 companies in Canada. For several years, CERI and CIDA canvassed the mining communities in Canada and Colombia, looking for input about how to make Colombia's mining sector more environmentally friendly, and more in line with the industry in developed countries. From the beginning, the aim was far from altruistic. "Canadian energy and mining sector companies with an interest in Colombia will benefit from the development of a stable, consistent and familiar operating environment in this resource-rich developing economy," read CIDA's summary of the project.

Greystar, one of the few foreign companies still in Colombia at the time, was involved in the effort for close to two years, says Felder, providing "input that reflected



THANKS TO CIDA, COLOMBIA ENCOURAGES FOREIGN INVESTMENT



GOLD MINING has been booming because Uribe got tough with the rebels and CIDA helped rewrite the mining code

JEREMY HORNER/CORBIS (TOP); LESLIE MAZOCH/AP

the mining industry's point of view as to what was important in such legislation to encourage mining." Another aspect of the project involved training Colombian mining officials, and was aimed at putting a "globalized perspective" on future mining activity, according to CERI-CIDA documents from 2001.

Historically, the country's gold and silver mines have been run only by small, local operators, unlike the coal and nickel sector, which is dominated by large-scale, modern operations. So foreign investment (and the jobs and wealth it brings) is welcome, but the transition to modern mining has not been smooth or well-managed by officials, local opponents say. In Canada, criticisms of CIDA's role were raised in 2002 by Ottawa's North-South Institute, an independent international development organization that had been working in Colombia at the time of the CIDA project. "Our project partners in Colombia regard CIDA as having played a large role in supporting and promoting a 'regressive' mining code that has weakened—rather than strengthened—democratic procedures," the institute's president, Roy Culpeper, told a foreign affairs committee. The project "has left a vital element of Colombian society feeling that their interests are excluded from the new mining regime," he added.

Such charges have raised broader questions within the aid community about CIDA's objective to improve economic conditions through promoting freer trade and foreign investment—especially when it doubly acts to promote Canadian industry. Foreign investment is widely considered an important aid tool for poorer countries, but is not a cure-all. "It's surprising to look at what CIDA's doing abroad," says Viviane Weitzner, a senior researcher at the North-South Institute. "Why aren't they also bolstering the social side of things and not just looking at economics or the environmental side? It's a gap that we've noticed."

In an email response, a CIDA spokesperson said the agency's Colombia project did involve the "development of a plan for consultations with indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities regarding the new mining code." CIDA's help in developing the code was also a "relatively minor" part of a broader project to strengthen Colombia's mining sector. Also, "the project itself did not draft mining related legislation, which was of course the purview of the Government of Colombia." The trouble, says union leader Ramirez, is that the consultations simply never took place. Rightly or wrongly, CIDA's image has taken a beating. Colombia may be booming, but the bad taste from the project lingers in the mouths of many Colombians. M

How to borrow $5,000 from 100 creditors

Prosper.com is the place to go when your bank turns you down

BY JOHN INTINI • Kara Hopkins' one-carat diamond solitaire is collecting dust in a New York City pawnshop. That's because in March, she and her husband, Brian, a 30-year-old financial consultant, hawked it for US$4,000 to pay off some of the massive credit card debt they accumulated last fall by putting their entire Jamaican getaway wedding on plastic. Her family, which wasn't thrilled with her choice in husband, refused to help. Now, months later, and still saddled with debt, Kara desperately wants her ring back (the pawnshop is keeping it in storage until September). "My finger feels naked," says the 29-year-old Web producer. "But with our credit, I can't go to a bank for a loan—they'd just laugh at me."

So the Manhattan couple turned to *prosper.com*—a unique stranger-to-stranger website (available only to Americans) that links wannabe borrowers with regular people—and offered 15.75 per cent interest to anyone willing to take a chance on them. "It's a new asset class," says Chris Larsen, the CEO of Prosper, which launched in February. "It's a sort of consumer bond."

Here's how it works: borrowers (there are always about 1,000 on the site) post how much money they need and the maximum interest rate they're willing to pay (rates are capped at 29 per cent). Multiple potential lenders then make bids on how much they'd give (usually between $50 and $100), and at what interest rate, to try to win the right to partially fund a loan. The worse a borrower's credit—ranked in one of eight categories between AA to HR (high risk)—the higher the interest rate. Listings are posted for up to 10 days, loans, which are paid back over a three-year term, can be no greater than $25,000. "We're not a one-to-one buyer-seller model like eBay," says Larsen. "It's a one-to-many model. For lenders it's safer to make a hundred $50 loans than it is to make one $5,000 loan."

Just like an online dating site, borrowers post photos of themselves with kids, pets or beat-up old cars to attract attention. (The Hopkinses opted for a wedding pic.) And they can add legitimacy by linking with a group—there are about 1,000 different ones—that has a great repayment record. Prosper runs credit checks, administers all transactions, and sends collection agencies after those who default on loans. It charges borrowers one per cent at closing (lenders are subject to a 0.5 per cent service charge). "We are the gatekeepers," says Larsen, who previously ran E-Loan, a Web-based company that funded US$27 billion in loans during his tenure. "We just make sure the people are who they say they are. It's up to the lenders to decide if they should get money."



In *It's A Wonderful Life*, everyone pitched in, but they didn't charge 29 per cent

The borrowing needs are wide-ranging, from small business dreams to paying off student debt to covering cosmetic surgery. Michael Johnson (credit rating: AA), a 39-year-old from Hollywood, Calif., wants US$8,000 to help bankroll a documentary and is offering to pay 10.5 per cent interest. The site also provides him with a built-in focus group. "If people aren't willing to give you money," says Johnson, "it might be a sign." Last week, the Hopkinses faced that reality when their second attempt on Prosper came up short. For lenders, Kara Hopkins' reward wasn't worth the risk. M



RESERVOIR DOGS PLAY IN THEIR UNDERWEAR

Following the official dedication of a new municipal reservoir on June 10, five employees of a municipal utility district near Austin, Texas, held a party that saw them drinking alcohol on public property, setting a fire in a parking lot and swimming in their underwear in a retention pond used for treating drinking water for town residents. It wasn't exactly the hijinks of hourly paid grunts among those fired was the district's interim general manager.

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GETTY IMAGES

WHAT WE BELIEVE

We want to ban porn. We're unsure about abortion. But gay adoption is fine. Just how did we get here?

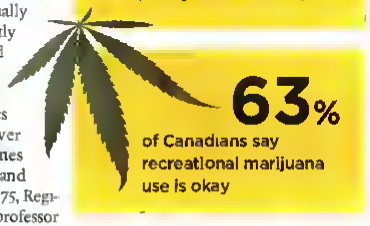
BY LIANNE GEORGE • In late 2003, around the time our government began experimenting in earnest with legalizing gay marriage and decriminalizing marijuana, *The Economist* pronounced—rather grudgingly, and with all sorts of caveats—that Canada had become "rather cool." Not *cold*. Cool. It was a giddy moment, and we've grown quite attached to this view of our country, forgetting perhaps that Canada the Cool—the Open-minded, the Progressive, the Inclusive—is actually a very modern concept. As recently as the early '70s, nobody would have accused us of that. Back then, contentious issues were bubbling to the surface. Activists, academics and policy wonks squabbled over how to establish feasible guidelines for gender equality, bilingualism and multiculturalism overnight. In 1975, Reginald W. Bibby, then an assistant professor of sociology at York University, took this charged moment as a perfect opportunity to conduct one of the first ever wide-scale surveys designed to map out the values, attitudes and beliefs espoused by Canadians. As it turned out, your average Canadian circa 1975—despite a probable affinity for Bad Company and K.C. & The Sunshine Band—was pretty square. More than a third of us, for instance, believed that a woman shouldn't work outside the home if her husband was capable of supporting her. Half of us believed that black people and white people should not marry. Three quarters of us believed homosexuality was aberrant—and abhorrent. "The fact of the matter is," says Bibby, "the data back then really shows that bigotry was alive and well. We were pretty down on a lot of groups."

But even then, it was clear that baby boomers—born between 1946 and 1964—held markedly different views from their parents and grandparents. As a group, they were veering off into some trippy social territory. "In a number of areas, like homosexuality, there was a dramatic, geometric jump in approval," says Bibby, now a professor of sociology at the University of Lethbridge. He continued his research, now referred to as the Project Canada Survey Series, for the next 30 years, presenting boomers with the same questions every five years, and comparing their answers to those of Canadians younger and older. His data, to be published this fall in a book called *The Boomer Factor: What Canada's Most Famous Generation is Leaving Behind*, explores how this generation has reformed, reshaped and remagined the country, and the attitudinal legacy boomers will leave behind as their years of influence draw to a close.

Bibby's findings—to which *Maclean's* was given exclusive advance access—illustrate how, in only three decades, we have transformed ourselves from a relatively homogenous group into one of the most pluralistic



In 1975, one in three Canadians believed that married women should not be employed if their husbands could support them. (Today it's one in 10.)



63% of Canadians say recreational marijuana use is okay



NO SEX, PLEASE, WE'RE NOT MARRIED

"I approve of premarital sex."

	In 1975	Now
Overall	67%	80%
aged 18-34	90%	77%
aged 35-54	63%	87%
aged 55 +	40%	75%

61%
of Canadians approve of, or accept, the idea of gay couples adopting children



THE XX FACTOR: WOMEN LEAD THE WAY

		Men	Women
Approval of homosexuality	(1975)	33%	52%
	(2005)	61%	70%
Approval of gay marriage	(2005)	39%	56%

societies in the world. More than anything, says Bibby, Canadians today identify personal freedom as our No. 1 goal—above family life, friendship, a comfortable life, or a rewarding career. And because we demand the freedom to make our own choices, the thinking goes, we'd best be willing to grant the same privilege to others—to live and let live. Which, it turns out, is what we've done. "Over a very short period of time," says Bibby, "we've taken a multi everything outlook in Canada."

Today, we can see this philosophy starkly reflected in our views on non traditional lifestyles and family configurations. Forty per cent of Canadians believe there is no one ideal family model. "Thirty years ago, there *was* only one type of family as far as most people were concerned: mother, father and 1.7 kids," says Alan Mirabelli of the Ottawa-based Vanier Institute of the Family. But the boomer generation and their children have grown familiar with divorced, single-parent and combined family scenarios, and Canadians are now less likely to say, with any certainty, that only the nuclear family model works. "By and large," says Mirabelli, "if people have had a good experience in their own family life growing up, they aspire to repeat that experience. If their family form was mother, father, 1.7 kids, then that's what they aspire to for themselves. If they've been through a divorce and had a step-parent relationship and it's been successful, they're more likely to say there is no ideal form."

This same attitude extends to our feelings about interracial and homosexual relationships. For example, in 1975, only 55 per cent of Canadians approved of whites and blacks marrying. Today, 94 per cent are perfectly happy with the idea. Likewise, approval of same-sex relationships hovered at only 25 per cent then, today, more than two thirds of us approve. "From 1990 to 2005, there was just a dramatic shift there," says Bibby of gay issues in general. "We're one of the world leaders there. I'd like to think AIDS awareness had something to do with it. And there's a sense of more compassion. The media and a lot of high profile people have certainly gotten behind the rights and the difficulties of people who are gay and lesbian." Gay marriage, while it remains a contentious issue, has the wholehearted approval of almost half of all Canadians, and an additional 22 per cent who disapprove on a personal level say they accept gay marriage as a matter of civil rights. Similarly, 61 per cent of Canadians believe that gay couples should be able to adopt, including the 21 per cent who personally disapprove of the idea.

Many of these changes have come about as a result of Canada's official policies of multiculturalism, and from personal experiences. Then there's the XX Factor. Canadians have become more tolerant, Bibby argues, as a result of women's increased public influence. According to his findings, women are quantifiably the more compassionate sex. And as they've come to establish a stronger voice in public life, they've helped to guide and shape the broader public's views on "person-related" issues such as same-sex marriage, child abuse, pornography, poverty, and racial and gender discrimination. "Whether it was in 1975, or in any survey since," says Bibby, "the proportion of women who saw these issues as very serious would invariably exceed that of males." Only one third of boomer men approved of homosexuality in 1975, compared to over half of boomer women. Today, 76 per cent of Canadian women say they approve of or accept gay marriage, compared to only 63 per cent of men.

This trend continues to accelerate among the younger generation. "Teens in general simply are so much more accepting of diversity," says Bibby. "They're more compassionate in areas relating to things like capital punishment and euthanasia, and open to religion and spirituality. But they're led by young women." Today, 83 per cent of women age 18 to 34 accept gay marriage, the highest acceptance rate of any group surveyed.

Part of what differentiates modern Canadians from our American counterparts is the fact that we generally tend to embrace the notion of relativism—the idea that when it comes to lifestyle choices, there are no absolutes. "Americans still believe in truth," says Bibby. "They really do maintain that there are some things that are true and some things that are false." Canadians, however, are more likely to see things in increments of right-ish and wrong-ish. The most important reason for this, he says, is the religious composition of our respective societies. Roughly a third of Americans identify themselves as members of evangelical or conservative Protestant groups (compared to eight per cent of Canadians), which leads them to adhere to very traditional family values. "That kind of composition simply translates into some very important differences," he says. "If you look at the evangelicals in the U.S. and Canada, the percentage who are opposed to, say, gay marriage is almost identical. If you look at mainline Protestants here—like Anglicans, Lutherans and Presbyterians—and you match them up against their counterparts in the U.S., they come out very much the same. Catholics come out very much the same on both sides, too. So the thing that tips the scale is that American life is characterized by such a large number of evangelicals. They shape the overall picture."

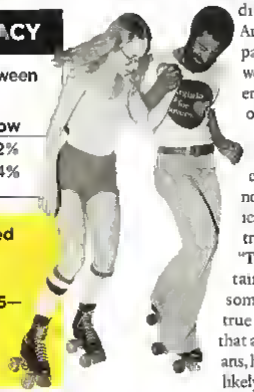
THE BOOMER LEGACY

"I approve of marriage between blacks and whites."

	In 1975	Now
Boomers	81%	92%
All Canadians	55%	94%

Fewer Americans approved of blacks and whites marrying in 1990—48%—than Canadians did in 1975—

55%







Six out of 10
Canadians believe the nuclear family—mom, dad and kids—is the ideal model

WHEN IS IT OKAY FOR A WOMAN TO HAVE AN ABORTION?

Percentage who said yes in 2005	CDA	USA
When her own health is seriously endangered by the pregnancy	92%	85%
When she becomes pregnant as a result of rape	86%	76%
When there is a strong chance of a serious defect in the baby	84%	72%
When the family has a low income and cannot afford more children	57%	41%
When she is not married and does not want to marry the man	52%	42%
When she is married and does not want to have any more children	53%	42%
When she wants an abortion for any reason	43%	40%

As such, the two countries' views on social and sexual diversity remain notably different. For instance, more than a quarter of Americans disapprove of marriage between blacks and whites. In the U.S., only 64 per cent of people believe that immigration is good for the country, compared to 78 per cent of Canadians. And while 60 per cent of Canadians approve of homosexual relations, only 38 per cent of Americans feel the same way. "There is a much stronger pocket of American society that holds what can still legitimately be called highly Puritan values toward sexuality, which are closely linked to taboo and shame," says Alexander McKay, research coordinator for the Sex Information and Education Council of Canada (SIECCAN) in Toronto. "That's why something like the exposure of Janet Jackson's nipple [on TV] would be seen as an inherently harmful thing, whereas here, we might scratch our heads and wonder what's the big deal."



IT'S FINE FOR JOE PUBLIC, BUT NOT FOR MY KID. . .

	Generally, I approve	Okay for my children
Getting a divorce	70%	41%
Unmarried sex	65%	53%
Cohabitation	73%	53%
Children out of wedlock	57%	33%

When it comes to marijuana, that most contentious of plants, Canadians are, if anything, more in favour of legalization now than ever. Sixty three per cent of us say we accept recreational pot use in general (including 29 per cent who wholly approve of the practice). Support jumps even higher—to a whopping 93 per cent acceptance rate—when it comes to the legal use of marijuana for medicinal purposes. By contrast, only about a third of Americans say they would support legalization.

And yet, while Canadians are collectively more open-minded than our southern neighbours, we still tend to aspire to very traditional lifestyles for ourselves. Most of us say that, ideally, we envision ourselves belonging to a traditional nuclear family. We plan to marry and have children, and we plan for those marriages to last forever. "Despite the family experiences of many Canadians in the post 1960s," says Bibby, "what is changing are the outcomes—not the aspirations."

We also wish the same for our children. For instance, 73 per cent of Canadians approve of the idea of couples living together without being married, when it comes to their own child, however, only 53 per cent of people say they would approve. Similarly, while 70 per cent of people approve of divorce in the general population, only 41 per cent say they would approve of their own child getting a divorce. But there's an important distinction between "approve" and "accept"—even if Canadians say they don't *approve*, the overwhelming majority of us say we would be willing to *accept* our children's choices. "The family is the most adaptive institution in the world," says Mirabelli. "It's very much like an elastic band. It stretches and contracts depending on the economy and the culture which surrounds it."

In other ways, certain groups have seemingly become more conservative in the decades following the sexual revolution of the late '60s and early '70s. During that period, and in the time immediately following, Canadians' acceptance of sexual experimentation was at an all-time high. For the first time in modern history, relatively large numbers of us mused openly

about the possibility that monogamous relations hips—and by extension traditional marriages—were passé. "In 1975, by way of illustration, the percentage of boomers who said they approved of extramarital sex was 26 per cent," says Bibby. "Now, it's down to 16 per cent. I think some of that reflected just the immediate impact of the sexual revolution. That was the mood of the time." Among younger Canadians today, those numbers are even lower. Only 12 per cent of Canadians age 18 to 34 accept the idea of married people having affairs. Similarly, in 1975, 94 per cent of boomers said they were okay with the idea of premarital sex. Today, among young Canadians age 18 to 34, that number is 77 percent. Bibby theorizes that more youth today may be willing to follow their churches' values than at the height of the sexual revolution.



McKay, however, suggests the drop is more likely the result of a generation of better educated young people. "Young people today are much more knowledgeable about sex—what they're getting into, what the potential implications are," he says. "And they're far more likely to take precautions." For example, says McKay, recent research shows that sexually active Canadian youth are clearly limiting their number of sexual partners. "I don't think it reflects a return to conservative values," he says. "I think it's a logical extension of the sexual revolution because now people are able to make truly informed decisions."

Another significant shift has appeared in our attitudes towards pornography. "We've seen a gradual increase in favour of banning the distribution of pornography since the '70s," says Bibby. Currently, more than 40 per cent of the population—and almost half of adult women—would have us not just regulate, but prohibit pornography entirely. Younger women, age 18 to 34, are more open-minded about it than boomer women and, perhaps not surprisingly, men are far more likely than women to indicate approval of such pastimes as phone sex and viewing pornography on the Internet. "My hunch is that many people have linked pornography and phone sex with their concerns about things like child abuse and sexual assault," says Bibby. "But younger women, I think, are not as willing to waive individual rights—even in an area such a pornography."

Of course, McKay points out that the findings may have a lot to do with how our interpretation of the word "pornography" has evolved. "I think many people today—when you use the term 'pornography'—are going to associate it with images that are clearly harmful, such as child pornography and sexually violent material," he says. "Whereas in the 1970s, when you mentioned pornography, that could include everything from *Playboy* to *Lady Chatterley's Lover*."

Perhaps the only area in which there has been very little movement is on the subject of abortion. In Canada, 43 per cent of adults agree that women should have the option of a legal abortion upon demand, up from 37 per cent in 1985. (Only a quarter of Americans feel the same way.) In Canada, however, levels of support tend to climb depending on the woman's reason for opting for abortion. For example, if she comes from a very low-income family and cannot afford more children, 58 per cent of people approve. If there is a strong chance of a serious defect in the baby, 86 per cent approve. If a woman's health is seriously endangered by the pregnancy, 92 per cent approve. These numbers, amazingly, remain virtually unchanged since 1975. "When you get into these specific kinds of areas, it seems like people are just locked into them," says Bibby. "Obviously the religious factor is an important one, but other people who are not necessarily actively involved in religious groups are still very much anti-abortion. It's simply an area where there hasn't been much movement over time." M

PERCENTAGE OF CANADIANS VERSUS AMERICANS WHO APPROVE OF...

In 2005:	CDA	USA
Homosexual relations	60%	38%
Premarital sex	80%	64%
Legal abortion available on demand	43%	27%
Immigration	78%	64%

THINGS WE DON'T APPROVE OF—FOR OURSELVES OR ANYONE ELSE

Viewing Internet porn	51%
Using phone sex lines	47%



49% of Canadian woman favour banning the distribution of pornography altogether. (A third of men do, too.)

HOW THEY DID IT

Undertaken every five years, sociologist Reginald Bibby's Project Canada surveys have been monitoring social trends in Canada since 1975. The latest, his seventh, was conducted between July and late November 2005. The surveys are sent by mail. The weighted national sample of 1,600 respondents is considered accurate within +/–2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Breakdowns by region, age and gender have a slightly higher +/– of four to five percentage points. His six prior national surveys, with weighted samples of approximately 1,200 each, are considered accurate within +/–3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

HOW WE LIVE

We're more worried about a lack of time than about money, health or our children. Still, we make time to watch TV, and to sit and think. As for sex, well, it's just that we're so busy.

BY BARBARA RIGHTON • Way back in 1975, when Reginald Bibby did the first of what he likes to call his "aerial photographs" of Canadian life, email was only a gleam in the eye of some über smart infant. Ditto the cellphone, the laptop and the BlackBerry. Living was easy. Or at least it was slower. Last November, when Bibby, a sociology prof at the University of Lethbridge, finished his seventh national survey, he discovered two central truths. The first was no surprise to him, though it may be surprising to the rest of us: Canadians valued their own personal freedom above everything, including family life and love. But this was as it had been in 1985, when he first asked the question. The second was a sore point, and it was new. More than money, their health or their children, Canadians told Bibby, they worried about time. Thanks to a multitude of stressors, they didn't have enough hours in the day to spend with their families, never mind their friends or colleagues or their own interests. On a list of 19 personal concerns, the No. 1 worry of people from 18 to 55 was never having enough time. Slightly more than half thought they were busier than their parents. Sixty-four per cent reported they almost never had extra time. Says Bibby, "The perception is that people are now working at a pace they have never experienced before." He calls it being "pathologically overextended."

54% of Canadians say they have less extra money now than they had 10 years ago





WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO TEACH OUR CHILDREN:

Responsibility for one's actions	92%
Politeness	85%
Concern for others	80%
Good manners	79%
Leaving the world in better shape	67%

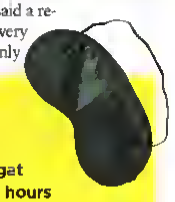
WHAT BOTHERS US THE MOST?

Lack of time	47%
Lack of money	39%
Health	37%
Our children	35%
Loneliness	20%



That's one aspect—an all-too-familiar one—of our lives today. But what of our goals and our aspirations? What do we actually do with the time we *have*? The data paint a curious picture of the shapes of our lives. When we are not holed up at the office, working at a frenetic pace, we are barricaded in our homes. There is a new focus on the bottom line: in every endeavour we want to know what's in it for us. Seventy-five per cent of Canadians told Bibby they have to look after themselves since they can't rely on anyone else to do it. Only 55 per cent said that people were as kind as they used to be. And in terms of simple courtesy, only 36 per cent thought the general population was as courteous today as in days gone by.

Busyness is undeniably part of the story. Blame the time crunch on technology and its promise to make our lives better. Bibby does. Technology has betrayed us, he says, and made our lives more hectic. In the latest instalment of his study Project Canada, Bibby writes, "Cellphones, laptops, software and portable printers have taken away our hiding places." And they have left us juggling our family commitments and jobs while trying to do everything faster in a more demanding society. In fact, being overextended is trendy. Overwork has become our culture, says University of Guelph professor Kerry Daly, a family sociologist and author of *Families in Time: Keeping Pace in a Hurried Culture*. "It's normal now to be somewhat busy. It's a badge of honour that says we are in the game." Canadian business now runs on adrenalin, Bibby says. And the intensity we feel every day on the job is not ameliorated by the presence of workplace pals, says Bibby. A good interpersonal relationship is not the payoff it once was. Neither is company loyalty. These days when people get a better offer, they just pack up and go. Often, the same is true of the companies they work for. Maybe because the flat-out pace is so hard to maintain, some Canadians surveyed by Bibby have lost their career aspirations as they've grown older. Among young adults, 59 per cent said a rewarding career was very important, while only



65% of Canadians get seven to eight hours of sleep a night. 21% get by on just six.

49 per cent of boomer men still felt that way Among older women, a different dynamic came into play 55 per cent of boomer women the ones who had to struggle to prove themselves 30 years ago, were as passionate about their work as ever

Our home lives, too, are hectic While we want close relationships and creature comforts, Bibby says, the two often conflict If the comfortable life is to be maintained, the time with the kids is shortened from a promised day at the beach to an hour of "quality time" before bed Not coincidentally, when they were asked about their views of parenting, only 60 per cent of Canadians said today's parents were doing a good job, compared with 89 per cent who said parents in the past did a good job

Failing to live up to our promises or fit everything in, says Alan Mirabelli, executive director of the Vanier Institute of the Family in Ottawa, is about time, but also about energy. We're just too tired by the time we get home. "People work too hard because they're afraid they will lose their jobs if they don't," Mirabelli says "Now people take work home and link themselves to the office. Where is the satisfaction either at home or at work?"

HOW OFTEN DO WE HAVE SEX?

Daily	2%
Several times a week	20%
Weekly	24%
Monthly or less	12%
Hardly ever or never	28%



Harried as we are, we do seem to spend a fair number of hours at home on relaxing activities More than half of us say we have the time to just sit and think every single day One in five of us spends 16 to 30 hours a week—that's between two and four hours a day—watching TV. Forty-nine per cent put in between 1½ and two hours a day. But any survey of how we're doing has to factor in both reality and expectations And then, in fairness, two hours of TV doesn't necessarily mean lounging on the couch watching *Desperate Housewives* and *Grey's Anatomy*, glass of wine in hand, Bibby says We're probably multi-tasking half listening to the TV while helping the kids with their homework, tapping away at laptops and reading the newspaper

Young people—the 18 34 age group—are the most worried about time (57 per cent), and women in general, says Bibby, are possibly the most time-deprived There is a curious distinction between married mothers and mothers who are separated or divorced Employed married mothers are the busiest 77 per cent of them say they never seem to have enough time (versus only 58 per cent of employed married fathers) Astonishingly, fewer employed separated or divorced mothers (58 per cent) complain of the same problem Who's to blame? "The conventional explanation is that husbands are not giving wives the kind of help they need," Bibby says "Women are dealing with the notion of the double day" In other words, work all day at work and work all night at home "The sheer volume isn't being shared."

Daly doesn't necessarily agree "There are higher levels of involvement by fathers," he says Yes, moms do still spend more time, but "a lot of dads are doing a good job of co-parenting now and facing the same stresses" The kids are all right, Daly says, especially since parenting is high on most couples' list of things they *want* to do well What might be suffering from the perceived "time famine," as Daly calls it, is the relationship between mom and dad "The increase in time spent with kids is coming at the expense of personal leisure and couple time Relationships atrophy."

So how fulfilled are we with the state of affairs within the four walls of home? In 2004, Bibby did a study for the Vanier Institute called the Future Families Project He asked 2,500 people across the country from ages 19 to 55 to answer a number of questions about marriage and relationships. People were all for them In spite of the high divorce rate (more than 38 per cent of all marriages end in divorce, according to Statistics Canada), couples were very positive about their marriages—while they were together Included in the top five things they liked were a sense of security, their partner's good traits, such as commitment, trust and reliability, the sense of family and the valuable addition of children But, as Mirabelli says, relationships take a lot of time, and it's time we don't always have to give When asked how often they had sex, a total of 40 per cent of respondents answered monthly, less than monthly, hardly ever, or never. Only about 20 per cent said they had it several times a week

53% of us have time every day to just sit and think



21% of us spend 16 to 30 hours a week—between two and four hours a day—watching TV. Another 49% put in one to two hours a day





WHO NEVER SEEMS TO HAVE ENOUGH TIME?

Employed married mothers	77%
Employed married fathers	58%
Employed cohabitating mothers	65%
Employed separated or divorced mothers	58%

Mirabelli can understand why By the time people do get home, he says, they often just want to be left alone "What is it we share?" he asks "Leftovers Leftover time Leftover energy and leftover commitment."

And then there is the outside world "Putting bread on the table, saving for tomorrow and raising their children," Mirabelli says, "is more of a negotiation with the larger economy and the larger society, which is inescapable Family is not an institution by itself" We seem to realize this, and most of us to try to engage with broader society. More than 42 per cent of us read a newspaper every day. More than 22 per cent read at least a few pages of a book daily. Nearly 25 per cent read at least one magazine a week And much of the rest of the time at home, we are on the Internet In 1999, Bibby found 29 per cent used the Net at home, in 2003, that had jumped to 55 per cent (much more than the 36 per cent who used it only at work) Still, these solitary activities have given us a narrower perspective in terms of the range of people we know and care about, Bibby says "Primary" people—our immediate families—are our main focus

Canadians used to have loyalties to the larger world In 1975, 22 per cent of us belonged to hobby-related groups and 22 per cent to service groups That had dropped to 15 per cent and 12 per cent respectively by 2005 Quite simply, Canadians told Bibby, when they were not at work, they were at home—not on the baseball diamond or the church social committee, not going to meetings of the classic Corvette car club or even to pro-sports games Says Bibby, "I have season tickets to the Eskimos but I am sharing them with another guy because I wouldn't have the time to even think about going to all the games—and there are only 10 of them."

So, membership in groups is declining, and charities and clubs are feeling the pinch In Guelph, Ont., Dave Marshall, the past president of one of the city's four local Rotary Clubs, says membership in his group is healthy for the moment, it has been steady at about 185 people for the past 10 years But, he says, "for every four or five new members we get who are in their 50s or older, we only get one in their 40s" His club, which recently raised $500,000 for area hospitals, would like to recruit younger members, but it has an attendance requirement of 60 per cent of its weekly meetings Simply showing up "is more and more difficult for people in their 30s and 40s who have school-aged children and growing careers," Marshall says

Canadians don't feel any particular antagonism toward being joiners According to Bibby, we're just being "really selective about where we are going to spend our time." There is a diminished value people place on being involved in an activity versus belonging to a group It's almost a matter of cost benefit analysis, Bibby says Getting involved is not worth people's time

We are passing this individualism on to our kids When asked how important it was for parents to instill various interpersonal goals in their children, most Canadians told Bibby that teaching their kids to respect their own individuality was more important than teaching them to respect authority And teaching them to be polite or take responsibility for their own actions trumped any utopian idea of teaching them to leave the world a better place Perhaps because we are so busy, perhaps because we care more about ourselves and our families and homes than anything beyond our doorsteps, Bibby says, we have simply narrowed our focus

Which leads us to the one thing that may be missing in an overworked, primary-relationship oriented country any form of old-fashioned social safety net made up of neighbours and choir members, the ladies' auxiliary, the Rotary Club—groups our parents' parents could count on for friendship and support in good times and bad Says Mirabelli, inadvertently paraphrasing *The Simpsons*, "We have become a nation of human doings, not human beings."

What we need is to find a balance between what is good for the individual and what is good for the group. Mirabelli predicts that social life and personal life could become more difficult—and less enjoyable—if we don't find ways of connecting people and building communities in environments of all kinds In other words, we should jettison the model we could call "Alone in the Crowd"—10 people all waiting for a plane at the airport, all talking to "their" people on cellphones and treating each other as if they are invisible.

In the meantime, we can take comfort in a happier contradiction. Yes, half of us seem to think working hard won't necessarily get you to the top, and more than 63 per cent told Bibby that the lot of the average joe is getting worse, not better Still, contrarians to the end, 89 per cent said we were fulfilled with our lives as a whole, thank you very much Now get out of our faces, we have things to do. M

50% of us think working hard won't neccessarily get you to the top



PARENTS, THEN AND NOW

"In the past, most Canadian parents did a good job of raising their kids":	89% say yes
"Today most Canadian parents do a good job"	60% say yes

WHAT DO WE VALUE?

Freedom	90%
Family life	83%
Being loved	82%
Being Canadian	62%
A rewarding career	51%
Community involvement	15%





PRAISE THE LORD AND CALL THE PSYCHIC

It turns out God is alive and well in Canada. So are angels, heaven, and ESP.

BY BRIAN BETHUNE • Lake Wobegon, the American humourist Garrison Keillor once said of his fictional Minnesota town, was so Lutheran that "even the Catholics were Lutheran." There's a lot of universal truth in that remark: religious faiths do shape the cultures in which they flourish, but the influence flows both ways. In Canada, since religious and linguistic tensions were inseparable for much of our past, Christian churches, according to University of Lethbridge sociologist Reginald Bibby, have always been cautious, and careful to "play by the rules of diversity." That means "not making excessive claims of uniqueness and not being overly aggressive in raiding each other's ranks. This is not a country where Christians call other people 'heathen,' but they also cannot be ridiculed as 'bigoted Bible-thumpers.'" Canada, it seems, is so pluralistic that even the Christians are pluralists.

That religious civility, and the decline in church attendance that began in all developed nations during the 1960s, has led the chattering classes—surely among the least devout of Canadians—to conclude that religion is inexorably fading out of national life. The sale, often for condominium projects, of numerous empty church buildings across the country, has only solidified that assumption. But as Bibby's series of public opinion surveys shows, a funny thing happened on the way to an atheist Canada: rumours of Christianity's demise have been greatly exaggerated. Eighty-one per cent of Canadians believe in God, and two-thirds of us that Jesus Christ is His divine son. Belief in angels, heaven and (to a lesser extent) hell, is almost as prevalent. Crunch Bibby's 2005 numbers how you will—based on age, on weekly or monthly visits, on denomination—and the attendance decline not only levels off but shows a turn toward growth since 2000.

Helping to hide the evidence of decline before—and resurrection now—is the fact that our forms of devotion have held remarkably steady since Confederation. Between Canada's first census of 1871 and the 1951 count, the nation's overall religious allegiance hardly budged, from there until the census of 2001, Roman Catholicism held fast, "other world faiths" unsurprisingly grew from two to six per cent, and mainline Protestantism cratered—falling from 44 per cent of the population to 20 per cent.

43% of Canadians have attended a religious service in the past six months—not counting weddings, funerals or holidays



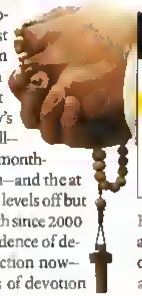
DENNIS ROBINSON/THE GLOBE AND MAIL (TOP); TOM HANSON/CP

HOW MANY PROTESTANTS AND CATHOLICS GO TO CHURCH ONCE A MONTH OR MORE...

In 1975	41%
In 2000	30%
In 2005	34%

THE BRIGHT SIDE OF THE AFTERLIFE

Believe in heaven	62%
Believe in hell	48%



WHAT BRINGS US TOGETHER?

Percentage of Canadians involved in:

Religious groups	30%
Sports or recreation	29%
School or community	17%
Political party or group	5%

But those lost sheep did not, as conventional wisdom expected, move even in part into conservative Protestantism, which has stayed at eight per cent since 1871. Instead, they swelled the ranks of the No Religion group, from less than one per cent in both 1571 and 1951, to 16 per cent. In truth that number should be higher, given the collapse of church going among Roman Catholics, especially in Quebec. But immigration from Catholic southern Europe and, more significantly, the tendency of lapsed Catholics—even those who have not darkened a church door in decades—to still describe themselves as Catholic, has kept the Church's affiliation percentage stable.

Just as it was the decline in attendance among Catholics that drove down the national attendance rate, it is the recent 10 per cent *increase* in Catholic church-going outside Quebec that has seen those numbers turn around. The uptick makes Bibby think Canada could be in for a "significant revitalization of organized religion." Especially since research indicates that perhaps two thirds of the 16 per cent strong No Religion group will "re-identify" with their birth faiths as they seek rites of passage relating to marriage, children, and death.

The big questions about life and death, suffering and meaning, have not gone away. Nor has the appeal of religion's traditional answers. Canada's mainstream Christian denominations have deep roots here and—witness the stubborn pledges of allegiance even as attendance plummeted—those brand loyalties are entrenched in our cultural DNA. Bibby is cautiously optimistic that the devout will remain a major element in the Canadian mosaic, so long as churches continue to provide—as they have in the past few years—the spiritual guidance their flocks want. And continue playing by the rules.

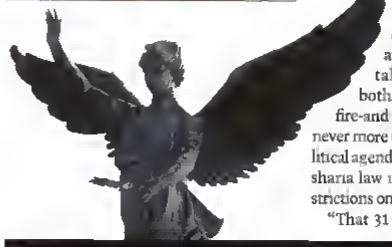
Keeping religion out of the public sphere remains crucial to keeping the peace between denominations, and more critically, between religious and secular. Among the more remarkable results in Bibby's latest survey are the answers to one multi part question. Pollsters asked respondents to imagine meeting a person about whom they know only a single "fact," and then to choose one of three answers (at ease, a bit uneasy, very uneasy) to convey their immediate reaction to that person. The descriptives ran the gamut from sex offender or drug addict (labels that brought the most negative responses—96 and 87 per cent of us, respectively, are at least somewhat uneasy in *their* presence), through former mental health patients and alcoholics, to ethno-cultural types Jews, Muslims, Aboriginals, black people and South Asians.

Racism, or at least its open expression to pollsters, seems to be as dead in Canada as can reasonably be expected. Only single-digit responses reported uneasiness with anyone's ethnic heritage. Religion, however, was a very different matter. In a result that will seem, in the post 9/11 climate, both unsurprising and somewhat alarming, 18 per cent of respondents are uneasy in the presence of a Muslim. But this is hardly evidence of the much-feared anti-Islamic backlash. Canadians save their *real* suspicion for born-again Christians: 31 per cent of us are unhappy merely to meet one. (Jews, presumably viewed as more of an ethnic than a religious group, disturb only five per cent of Canadians.)

It's hard to guess what images formed in respondents' minds when they were given such stereotypical labels. In the case of born-again Christians, the current U.S. administration is so deeply unpopular here—among secular Canadians as much for its religiosity as its policies—that the image may well have been of President George W. Bush. That in itself would have been enough to spike the negative numbers upwards. But almost 80 per cent of Canadians, according to the 2001 census, identify themselves as Christian, and that means unease about born-agains comes from *within* the faith as well. It's reasonable to conclude that some of the negative attitude toward fundamentalists, Christians and Muslims both, comes from hostility towards fire-and brimstone religion. And that's never more true than when people fear a political agenda: the proposed introduction of sharia law in Ontario, for instance, or restrictions on abortion or same-sex marriage.

"That 31 per cent number doesn't surprise me at all," comments Rev. Mary Joseph, pastor of Pathways, a United Church affiliated "progressive Christian community" open to anyone interested in the thought and teachings of Jesus. "This is a fairly religious country, with a huge Christian base. But many people resent the element of judgment in fundamentalist churches." A lot of it, Joseph concurs, flows from the same severe stance on sexual matters—abortion and homosexuality, divorce and remarriage, premarital sex and birth control—that did so much to empty the mainstream churches in the first place. But there's another element as well, she adds. "People interested in alternative spiritual ways feel harshly judged and unwelcome too, like all those Christians who are interested in Buddhist meditation."

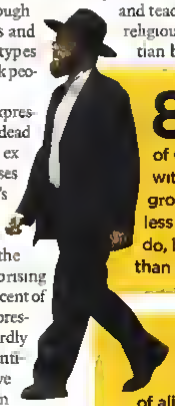




KEVIN FRAYER/CP (TOP); TOM HANSON/CP (CENTRE)

WHOM DO WE FEEL UNEASY AROUND?

Sex offenders	96%
Alcoholics	71%
Former mental patients	63%
Born-again Christians	31%
Policemen	24%
Muslims	18%
Jews	5%



84% of Canadians identify with a religion or religious group. We attend services less often than Americans do, but more frequently than Europeans

57% of all Canadians believe in ESP, and 55% in psychic powers. A third believe we can communicate with the dead.

THE NUMBER OF CANADIANS WHO BELIEVE:

Jesus is the son of God	66%
Angels exist	62%
I personally have experienced an event before it happened	52%
God cares about me personally	65%
We can have contact with the spirit world	46%

Bibby's poll shows that Canadians do indeed embrace an array of spiritual beliefs alongside traditional articles of faith. A third of us believe in astrology, and more than half (57 per cent) are fairly sure ESP exists. Two-thirds think there's life after death, more than believe in either heaven or hell. Slightly more than 31 per cent consider it likely that we can communicate with the dead, although 46 per cent think we can do so with the spirit world. It seems a glaring contradiction that the number of people who believe we can communicate with spirits is 50 per cent greater than those who think we can talk to the dead—especially since millions of Christians pray daily to saints, all of whom are dead. But it's another intriguing glimpse into the national soul. Clearly there's room for a wide, if often contradictory, variety of religious belief in this country. Just remember to keep it polite. M

DIVIDED WE STAND

Worrying about the old solitudes may be obsolete. The new Canada is full of new ones. We're a mosaic of mosaics, and apparently we're happier this way.

BY JONATHON GATEHOUSE • Canada used to have an identity crisis. Now we just suffer from multiple personalities. In the past three decades, the way Canadians view themselves has undergone a rapid transformation, according to the latest findings of Project Canada, a series of national opinion surveys stretching back to 1975. Our endless—mostly fruitless—search for a single, shared vision of what it means to be a Canuck has been supplanted by a growing sense that this country's greatest strength is its diversity of opinions, beliefs and lifestyles. Spurred on by government policies like multiculturalism and official bilingualism, and the creation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, this "pluralistic mindset" has expanded to affect Canadian society in ways that few could have foreseen. "We now have not only a cultural mosaic but any number of additional mosaics in virtually every sphere of life—a family mosaic, a sexual orientation mosaic, a moral mosaic, a religious mosaic," Reginald Bibby, the founder of Project Canada, and a sociologist at the University of Lethbridge, writes in his forthcoming book *The Boomer Factor*. "We now have a very different outlook from Canadians in the early 1970s on issues such as racial intermarriage, ideal families, sexual orientation, and moral and religious truth. At minimum, as Canadians we are expected to be willing to tolerate differences, even if we do not *approve* of different ideas and behaviour."

36%
of Canadians are afraid to walk at night within 1 km of their own home. In 1975, that number was 40%



The latest survey results, compiled over the last half of 2005, suggest we've finally found a comfort zone, agreeing to disagree on a whole range of divisive political and social questions. Two thirds of Canadians accept gay marriage, and six in 10 support the right of gay couples to adopt, including 20 per cent who personally disapprove of both those practices. And in comparison to the United States, we remain more firmly convinced that immigration is a good thing for the country (78 per cent to their 64 per cent), that abortion should be available on demand (43 per cent to 27 per cent) and that pot should be legalized (45 per cent versus 36 per cent). In fact, there is precious little evidence that Canadians are getting sucked into the red state/blue state culture war that has been raging south of the border since the contentious 2000 election. Confidence in newspapers and the press—while not exactly rock-solid—is actually on the rise in this country, with 87 per cent now saying they have either "some" or "more" trust in the written media, 30 points higher than the U.S. figure. And almost eight in 10 Canadians still rate television as at least partially trustworthy, versus fewer than six in 10 Americans.



WHO HAS TOO MUCH POWER?

1975	2005
Americans (73%)	Americans (57%)
French Cdns (32%)	French Cdns (33%)
Jews (29%)	Aboriginals (26%)
Immigrants (19%)	Immigrants (25%)
Native Cdns (8%)	Muslims (22%)

"Canadians may hold similar values to Americans, but we hold them a lot more tentatively," says Gregg Olsen, a political sociologist at the University of Manitoba. Our classic "mid-Atlantic" model, somewhere between the individualistic U.S. and the more statist Europe, still holds, despite the changes in our own country and the wider world.

And having successfully weathered the national unity challenges of two Quebec referendums, and the Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords, it seems that Canadians have decided that "divided we stand" isn't such a bad way to live after all. As our cities fill with the sounds of more and more languages, we've come to grips with the formerly contentious policy of having two "official" tongues. National support for bilingualism now stands at a high water mark: 64 per cent. In Quebec, 89 per cent are in favour, and support continues to grow in previously hard-to-sell regions like British Columbia (49 per cent) and the Prairies (47 per cent). Only 12 per cent of Canadians now rate the state of English-French relations as a very serious problem, and nationally just 33 per cent believe that Quebec will eventually separate. (In Quebec, 48 per cent still believe sovereignty is a possibility, although only 25 per cent rate it a strong likelihood.)

But Canadians' growing sense of comfort with our multiple selves shouldn't be confused for content

WHOM WE TRUST MORE NOW THAN WE DID 10 YEARS AGO:

Schools
Local government
The police
Newspapers
Unions



WHOM WE TRUST LESS:

Big business
Provincial government
The feds



WILL QUEBEC SEPARATE?

Canadians	8%
Quebecers	25%

28%
of Canadiens think we should heve the right to additional private health care if we cen afford it. Another 41% somawhet egree



ment. The sense that corporations, the rich, and politicians wield too much power in our society has only slightly diminished over the past three decades. And the only change in the pantheon of bigotry—a third of us say the French have too much power, and a quarter respectively say Aboriginals and immigrants do—is the inclusion of newer arrivals such as Muslims, at 22 per cent. (Jews, cited as being too powerful by 29 per cent in 1975, are now viewed suspiciously by just under 16 per cent nationally, although a worrying 26 per cent response in Quebec suggests that more traditional prejudices are still alive and well in some parts of the country.)

Our tradition of worry and complaint carries on, even if some of the focal points have changed. We rate such diverse issues as crime (81 per cent), the price of gas (79 per cent), and inadequate nursing homes for seniors (75 per cent) as "very" or "fairly" serious problems for Canada. The state of health care remains the No. 1 worry (86 per cent). Although the things we aren't particularly concerned about—national unity, 52 per cent, Aboriginal/white relations, 55, and terrorism, 59 per cent—should perhaps give us more pause for thought. Admittedly, the survey was concluded well in advance of the June arrests of 17 alleged homegrown terrorists who hatched plots to blow up landmarks in Toronto and Ottawa. But do we sincerely rate bullying in schools (67 per cent) and crystal meth (71 per cent) as bigger threats than al-Qaeda inspired jihadists?

Frank Harvey, a Dalhousie University political scientist, says he suspects it is a function of how we ask the question. Other surveys have indicated that Canadians remain highly concerned that the United States could again be attacked by terrorists, but the sense that Canada is also in the crosshairs has been slower to develop. Paradoxically, the Toronto arrests—which, if the authorities are proven right, should convince Canadians that the hundreds of millions Ottawa is spending on counterterrorism is working—may actually end up doing just the opposite. "The problem with terrorism, unlike other risks out there, is that the public doesn't really sense that these things are controllable," says Harvey. Governments spend more and more to put the public at ease, but fears never dissipate. And when a counterterrorism failure allows an attack like those in Bali, Madrid, or London, all past successes and policy tinkering are suddenly moot. "Consider the money that Israel has spent to create a new normal," says Harvey. "Now that's what the U.S. is trying to do. It's inevitable that Canada will feel the ripple effects."

PERCENTAGE WHO BELIEVED THESE PROBLEMS WERE VERY OR FAIRLY SERIOUS IN CANADA IN 2005:

Health care	86%
Environment	83%
Price of gas	79%
Terrorism	59%
U.S. influence	58%

The results of the latest Project Canada survey also point to another revolution on the national horizon. In addition to becoming more tolerant of pluralism, Canadians are becoming more and more individualistic. Confidence in many of our society's cornerstone institutions like religious organizations, and the federal and provincial governments, has steadily fallen over three decades. So has membership in all types of groups and organizations. And while Canadians feel slightly better about things like the court system and local government than they did in 1995, our schools (55 per cent) and police (69 per cent) are the only public institutions that a majority of Canadians continue to express high levels of trust in. Bibby suggests that the slide in societal deference started with the baby boomers—a highly educated, well-travelled, and now wealthy generation—but has since picked up speed. "The computer and Internet-led explosion of information in recent years has made it possible for individuals to know more than ever before about just about everything—or, at a minimum, put us in a position where we *think* we know more than ever before about just about everything," he writes.



WHO IS BOTH INTERESTED AND INVOLVED IN POLITICS?

18-34 yr olds	23%
35-54 yr olds	15%
55 plus	15%

Our emerging know-it-all nation, already used to seeking second, third or eighth opinions, will increasingly question the decisions of everyone from plumbers and doctors to the media and politicians, Bibby predicts. And in the decades ahead, that "inflated sense of our own expertise" may lead us into trouble as we saddle our leaders in all walks of life with unrealistic expectations. "People can feel that they have the right to speak up, without necessarily speaking with informed voices," he writes. Too much opinion can be a bad thing, it seems, even for those who make their living studying it. M



Almost 75% of Canadians disagreed with the following statement. We should worry about Canada and let the rest of the world take care of itself.

VALUES LOST IN TRANSLATION

Quebec cares about poverty, but not honesty or friendliness

BY CAMERON AINSWORTH-VINCZE

Understanding what makes the average Quebecer tick is a bit like trying to drive through downtown Montreal for the first time, during a snowstorm. You might be able to read the signs, but you'll still likely wind up lost and confused as everyone else speeds by you.

Residents of *la belle province* even tend to perplex pollsters. Statistics from Project Canada show a seeming contradiction between their concern for social problems, and the values, principles and emotions that actually guide their lives. When asked how concerned they were about issues like poverty, child abuse, racial and gender discrimination, violence and the environment, Quebecers voiced a greater concern than people in any other province. In fact, in 17 of 32 categories related to social problems, Quebecers led the country by labelling such matters very serious.

But when it comes to the importance placed on personal values usually associated with compassion, and a social conscience, it was a different story. Asked to gauge the merit of values like friendliness, honesty, courtesy, a concern for others, generosity, forgiveness, patience, politeness, involvement in the community and being loved, Quebecers ranked lowest in the country in 31 of 34 such categories. Only when it came to recognition, cultural heritage and cleanliness did the percentage deeming them "very important" exceed the national average.

Morton Weinfeld, a sociology professor at McGill University, says one reason for the apparent paradox is that Quebecers have moved away from the Church, and from traditional values, and have become more progressive over the last three or four decades. "Maybe some of that might be feeding into this notion that things like courtesy, for example, or politeness, are sort of artificial things that aren't really important," he says.

And being progressive has apparently not made Quebecers any happier. When asked to rate the degree they are bothered by such personal problems as loneliness, depression, boredom, getting older, looks, a lack of money and feelings of inferiority, they ranked highest in the nation. Or maybe, says Leslie Laczko, a sociology professor at the University of Ottawa, it's that Quebec has a much higher proportion of people who are single and in common law relations as opposed to marriage. "That itself is a significant part of this big puzzle that social scientists are trying to solve," he says, adding that single people are more likely to feel isolated, depressed and bored. "When you are more alone you feel more alone," he says.

For Reginald Bibby, director of Project Canada, the Quebec statistics remain a mystery and a point of curiosity. "What is clear is that there have been some features of Québécois and francophone culture that have been very, very different," he says. "But you just don't have predictable lines." Neither do the streets of downtown Montreal. M

THOSE WHO THINK THE FOLLOWING PROBLEMS ARE VERY SERIOUS:

Problems	QC	Rest of Canada
Poverty	48%	28%
Child abuse	53%	32%
Suicide	42%	14%
Violence	39%	28%
Racism	21%	11%
Terrorism	35%	24%

THOSE WHO THINK THE FOLLOWING VALUES ARE VERY IMPORTANT:

Problems	QC	Rest of Canada
Friendliness	53%	78%
Courtesy	64%	83%
Forgiveness	60%	80%
Generosity	45%	58%
Politeness	66%	77%
Honesty	87%	94%

FIELDS OF DREAMS

Wayne! Come back, Wayne! The NHL is losing fans to the CFL.

BY CATHY GULLI

The biggest upset in professional sports has just been announced: the great Canadian fan has traded favourite sports. Over the last 15 years, Canadians have become less enamoured of the NHL, major league baseball and figure skating (the NBA has maintained its meek following). Cheers, jeers—and ticket money—have been redirected to the once-laughable CFL.

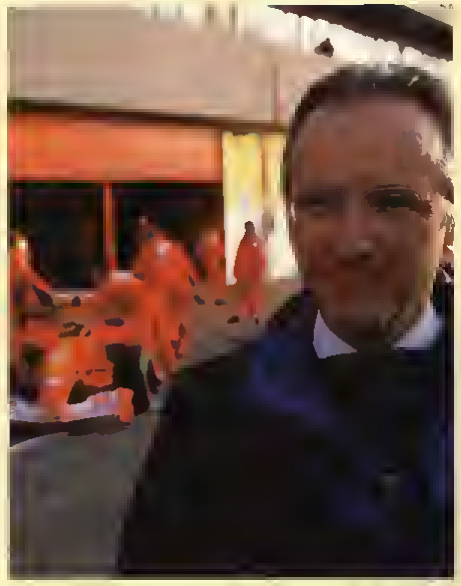
"It used to be bush league, with no intensity," says Reginald Bibby, a University of Lethbridge sociologist who has tracked Canadian interest in sports. But since the league changed ownership and began rebranding several years ago, homegrown football has become a national passion. Now, remarkably, more Canadians (19 per cent) say they follow the CFL than say they follow the NHL or MLB (13 per cent each) or the NBA (seven per cent). "The notion that we live or die by the NHL is an exaggeration," says Bibby, explaining that last year's NHL lockout, the retirement of celebrity players like Wayne Gretzky, poorly performing teams and outright abandonment by clubs in Winnipeg and Quebec City feed the disenchantment.

The CFL is also capitalizing on its distinctly Canadian identity to attract young people—the percentage of fans between 18 to 34 has grown since 1990, while baseball and hockey fans have gotten older. "This youngest generation probably has more patriotism than any other in recent history," says Brent Scrimshaw, the CFL's chief marketing officer. "It's a definitively Canadian game that plays right across the land, and has amazing heritage."

It's also affordable relative to most other professional sporting events, and that goes a long way with busy, money-conscious Canadians. "There's so much competition for our time, our entertainment dollar and our interest. These teams are all fighting so hard," says Bibby. Unfortunately, "some of them just aren't winning out." M

The research for this editorial package was provided by Reginald Bibby, professor of sociology at the University of Lethbridge. His book, The Boomer Factor: What Canada's Most Famous Generation Is Leaving Behind, *will be published by Bastian Books this fall.*

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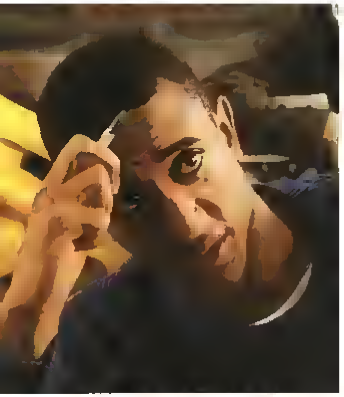
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Your course, lost in translation

What to do when you can't understand your professor's accent?

BY CATHY GULLI • Last winter, first-year students at the University of Calgary had just begun their second semester when they encountered their greatest academic challenge yet: economics. But it wasn't the material that proved so difficult to understand—it was the instructor. His thick accent made learning all but impossible, and only weeks into the course, complaints poured into the students' union. Soon, the department head was involved, and a petition drawn up to boost the students' case. "But it actually didn't go that far," says Shannon O'Connor, a vice-president for the students' union. "The undergraduate coordinator stepped in and changed the professor for them."



COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN: Too many are saying 'Taach, it's all Graak to ma'

It's one solution to an increasingly common issue on university campuses, where many brilliant professors also speak English as a second language. More than 40 per cent of professors in this country are first-generation Canadian citizens. Enrolment of full-time international grad students—many of whom work as teaching assistants, or TAs—rose 34 per cent between 1992 and 2003. "The reality is our institutions are becoming more and more globalized," says David Robinson, associate executive director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers. "Because of that, we're having to deal with situations that we didn't have to before." At one time, he says, the major complaint was the odd prof with a very thick British accent. Now accents of every kind are more prevalent.

Adding to the problem is that universities tend to hire professors who can, first and foremost, bring in lucrative grants for research. "Teaching, quite frankly, becomes secondary," Robinson says. So students such as third-year undergrad Alicia Corscadden, 23, are encountering accomplished professors who are unable to effectively relay their expertise in the classroom. "These professors are extremely intelligent," she says, "but if they can't get the message across to the students, then knowledge isn't being passed on. So it's not very helpful."

Of course, the accent issue is a contemporary variation of an age-old academic problem: professors whose research skills surpass their classroom technique. Corscadden, who spent two years studying at the University of Toronto before transferring to the University of Guelph, has struggled to understand two professors and a TA so far. In each instance, "his accent was so strong that by the time you figured out what he said, you had missed his next point," she recalls. Instead of going to class, Corscadden says she would go online and find lecture notes, which she and her friends would use to teach each other. What's more, the language barrier prevented her from taking advantage of office hours, when most profs work through difficult concepts with students one on-one. "It discourages you," she laments.

'HIS ACCENT WAS SO STRONG,' SAYS A STUDENT, 'THAT BY THE TIME YOU FIGURED OUT WHAT HE SAID, YOU HAD MISSED HIS NEXT POINT'

Mike Sullivan, also a student at Guelph, couldn't communicate with a chemistry TA, whose limited English vocabulary made assignments a battle. "They would give you zero when you actually got the question right because they couldn't understand the words you used," he explains. Worse, sly students who'd answered questions incorrectly could talk their way into good marks by capitalizing on the TA's unfamiliarity with certain words. "It's frustrating, especially when you spend so much money [on tuition]," he says.

But professors, too, are expressing concern about their ability to communicate effectively with students—and schools have begun to respond. Guelph plans to run a two-day workshop this summer on clear communication, focusing on voice projection and speech pace, says Maureen Mancuso, academic provost and vice-president. The University of Calgary offers pronunciation classes, and a faculty development program encourages profs to incorporate technology such as PowerPoint in lectures so students can learn visually. Dalhousie University has an instructional guide for international TAs that discusses language skills. And profs at the University of Manitoba can take part in the SpeakEasy program, which originated as an "accent modification" class taught by Karen Jensen, music professor and associate dean of graduate studies. The goal isn't to have everyone speaking with a universal accent, she calls different accents "glorious" and says that working to improve delivery of English words simply shows "a desire to teach better."

For students, the most common advice is to talk with the prof and respectfully suggest slowing down the lecture or using handouts and visual aids. If that proves unsuccessful, a trip to the students' union, and then the department or faculty head, may be necessary. Many students don't complain formally because they fear offending their prof or seeming discriminatory or racist. Or they just feel powerless, like Sullivan. He didn't address his situation, and wound up with the same TA—and the same problem—again.

On the other hand, Mancuso of Guelph also encourages students in this situation to listen more carefully. "Students have to work to train their ear to recognize, appreciate and understand different speech patterns and dialects. Because that's the world. And that's the workplace." Turns out, that's the university too. M

BLACKBOARD JUNGLE

JUDGE GAGS SCHOOL BOARD BUNGLER

A Mardi Gras-loving school board member, a misuser of school funds and a bungling parada drivar, David Thomas Jr. has baan ordarad by an Alabama judge to rapay US$9,033 spent on baadad nacklacas ha bought during Mobile's 2006 Mardi Gras. Ha's also baen banned from Mardi Gras paradas after driving over a girl's foot. And bacause school board officials are so weary of his antics, tha judga ordarad Thomas not to spaak to tham again.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MENUEZ/GETTY IMAGES

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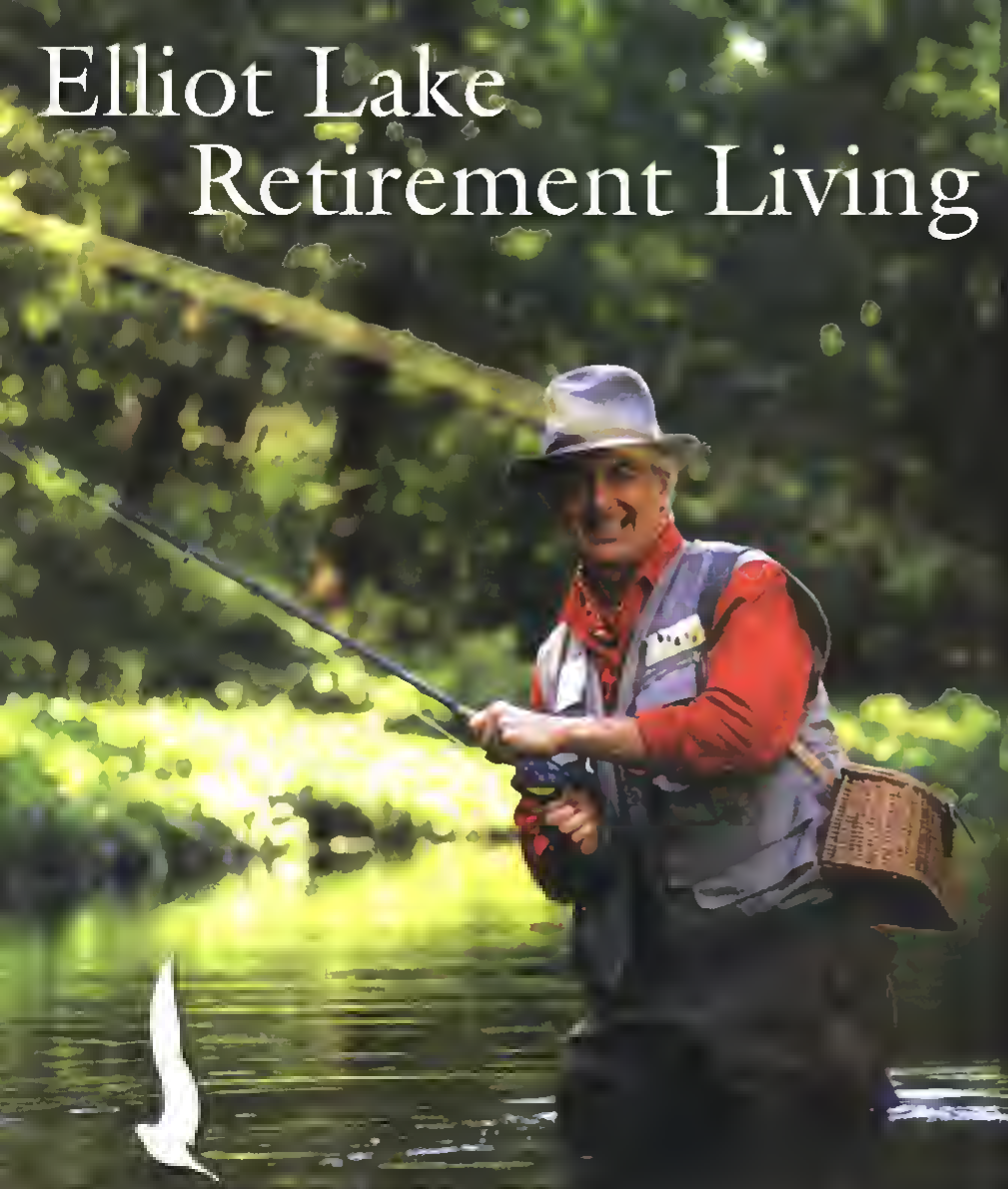
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HIGH SEAS, DEEP LOWS AND A SOUL ADRIFT

As a boy he sailed the world. Now he's up for attempted murder.

NICHOLAS KÖHLER • Jonathan Stuemer was nine years old when, with his parents and two brothers, he set sail from Ottawa on the Northern Magic, a 12.8-m, Dutch-built yacht, for what would become a four-year, round-the-world voyage. Triggered by his mother Diane Stuemer's brush with cancer, the trip spanned 65,000 km and 34 countries and amounted to a boyhood idyll. Jonathan grew into adolescence dodging pirates on the high seas, wrestling baby orangutans in Indonesia, and enduring the teasing laughter of Polynesian children in Tonga.

By the time the family came full circle, gliding home on the Ottawa River one rainy day in August 2001, the Stuemers had become local celebrities. A crowd of 3,000 people lined the riverbank, drawn to the returning Northern Magic by Diane's popular weekly column in the *Ottawa Citizen* detailing her family's exploits. Eighteen months later—just months after she published a book-length account of the voyage—Diane's death from cancer at the age of 43 generated an outpouring of grief almost without precedent in Ottawa. A year after that, her husband, Herbert Stuemer, put the Northern Magic up for sale. "We have a lot of memories on that boat," he said then. "For that reason alone, I would sell her." The move appeared at the time to be a mournful closing note to the Stuemer story. But early on the morning of June 17, Jonathan, now 18, is said to have attacked Herbert with a hatchet as he lay asleep in bed.

Ottawa police came across the young man later that morning as he wandered in Orléans, a staid development just east of the downtown core where he lives with his father and two brothers, Michael, 20, and Christopher, 14. Herbert, who runs a charity foundation named after the Northern Magic, refuses to comment on the alleged attack, which left him with minor injuries. Jonathan, meanwhile, was last week deemed fit to stand trial for attempted murder and possession of a weapon for dangerous purposes, and remains in jail awaiting a court-ordered 30-day psychiatric assessment.

Little is known of the young man Jonathan has become since his family's return to Canada, he last attended an Orléans-area high school and lists "math tutor" as his occupation on online profiles. In a *Citizen* article in late 2001, his mother Diane alluded to her middle son's difficulty adjusting to life "ashore," as she put it. "Jonathan had a shaky start on the school year, as he learned to navigate through the eddies and whirlpools of a social context even trickier than the reef strewn waters off Sudan," she wrote. "After his first week in Grade 8, he was disillusioned and asked whether we couldn't just get back on the boat and sail around the world another time." Sensitive and bright, shight and bespectacled, Jonathan was the most attached of the Stuemers to memories of their voyage. "Jonathan's big heart and generous soul are helping him make his way through," wrote Diane.

But Jonathan's return to Orleans, particularly after his mother's death, saw him withdraw into Internet role-playing games, a world of computer-generated orcs, elves and wizards where he adopted such guises as Alora Deathblow and Vror Emeraldfury. The young man who now stands accused of attempted murder also left behind a string of often disturbing Web postings detailing his depression (he describes himself in one as "kinda emotionless"), his thoughts about suicide, and his concerns about how a parent might be affected by a child's decision to take his own life. "I do have some heavy mood swings and people call me more serious than most," Jonathan, using the online pseudonym "Ubergoat," wrote in one such posting last year. "I dont mind saying why," he adds. "My mother died over 2 years ago and I still havent gotten over it yet I guess."

As the years wore on, the Web postings suggest that Jonathan retreated deep into himself and his online gaming. "For a long time a few years ago," he wrote, "I was completely obsessed over [the online game] diablo 2, I had 5 hours of sleep every day (weekends included) didnt study at all (same now), no homework, didnt eat anything except when forced too nobody really noticed and that was my own family." When, in 2003, the city of Ottawa named an Orléans park after Diane Stuemer, Jonathan chafed under the presence of relatives visiting for

HE'S CHARGED IN AN ATTACK ON HIS DAD, BUT HIS WEB POSTS ARE A PORTAL ON A TROUBLED LIFE



TO BETTER DAYS. Now Jonathan, waaring glassas, is in jail

KEYSTONE/GETTY IMAGES

COLLAR OF THE WEEK

NEVER TAKE A DOG ON A GETAWAY

The dog that brought Nicholas Galanis to justice didn't balong to tha police, it was his own dog. Utah cops approachad Galanis to talk to him about stolan proparty, but ha ran for his car with the dog and took off. Pursuing him down a bumpy road, police watchad tha dog gat slammad against tha windows. It showed its displeasure by biting its ownar on the face. Cops caught up with Galanis, as wall as part of his nosa, which tha dog bit off.

the ceremony "They're leaving monday or tuesday so tuesday night latest I'll be back to my normal uber active self," he wrote in explanation for his online absence. "In other news, there's a freakin park named after me!"

Then Jonathan's online remarks took a more troubling turn. "I might be opening up a can of worms + pandoras box all jumbled up into some box of worms or something like that," he begins before asking "What do you guys think of suicide?" He continues by outlining what might motivate such a course of action. "Lets say theres nothing in somebodies life, dead parents and no other family, a social outcast (easily happens if the person is still mourning about the loss) and crummy job ... I don't really think I could blame the person for ending his/her life," he writes, adding too that "mental illness" could "make you think that suicide is the best thing to do."

In another post he is more explicit. "Some people like gambling and others dont. Me personally I'd put my money in a bank before going out and gambling it away, so committing suicide is more like putting your life in the bank rather than continuing gambling and possibly ending up deeper in the hole than before." But, he adds—there's a rub. "Committing suicide would be kind of like dishonoring the parents which isn't the right thing to do either." In a subsequent and even more troubling post, Jonathan appears to solve the dilemma. "If the person believed there would be a better place waiting for him/her ... it would be cruel to keep him/her on earth to be honest. Might as well put him/her on the rack while you're at it."

It is not clear how Jonathan's Web postings will affect his case. But they follow a spate of Internet musings that have collided with Canada's criminal justice system. In February 2005, the judge presiding over the first-degree murder trial in Toronto of a teenage boy accused in the slaying of his brother, a 12-year-old known only as "Jonathan," ordered a mistrial after the *National Post* reported on a series of Web postings by the Crown's star witness. This spring, Edmonton police requested that a popular website remove a series of disturbing postings by a 12-year old girl accused along with her 23-year old boyfriend in a triple murder. And with such communications now firmly a part of youth culture, the issue likely won't go away. "It becomes a problem that people actually don't think about what they're saying before they post," says Osgoode Hall law professor Alan Young. "When you used to sit with a pen and paper, people always considered, what would be the implication of me committing myself to writing?" For a lonely and troubled young man like Jonathan, such considerations may have been the last thing on his mind. M

MISSING: THE GLENN GOULD SIGNATURES

How a 62-year-old Texas researcher got snagged on the Web

BY PATRICIA TREBLE • It might never have come to light if it wasn't for Kevin Bazzana's Swedish friend. Last December, Jorgen Lundmark sent an email to Bazzana, joking that if the B.C.-based Glenn Gould biographer had "an extra US$8,500, he might want to buy this!" Lundmark was referring to an item for sale on the website of a New York music manuscript dealer: a piece of paper containing 18 signatures obsessively written by the reclusive Canadian pianist on March 13, 1978. His email turned out to be the first act in a drama that has led to criminal charges and renewed questions about the safety of historic documents—as Brazzana realized when he checked



GOULD in 1959. His archived John Henrys might be forged

the site, the document in question belonged to Libraries and Archives Canada.

On Gould's death in 1982, much of his recordings and letters, and even his piano and chair, were bequeathed to the nation. The Gould collection, which uses the pianist's signature as its logo, is the pride of Library and Archives Canada. And when Bazzana saw the signatures document for sale, alarm bells rang. Pulling a copy of the page from his own files, he had the curators check on its location. They told him the original was safe, but Bazzana was not reassured. He called Roger Gross, the dealer trying to sell the document. Gross told Bazzana he'd bought it from Barbara Moore, a 62-year-old Texan who'd claimed she was a researcher at the library when it was first organizing Gould's bequest and had obtained the page when the institution disposed of items it didn't want. Bazzana thought the story sounded "ridiculous": cataloguing every item, however extraneous, is common practice in archives.

Bazzana soon heard that the library had started an internal investigation. Then the NYPD's cyber-crimes unit was called in and the page taken as evidence. In May, Moore was charged with criminal possession of stolen property, grand larceny and attempted grand larceny. If found guilty, she faces 22 years in prison for allegedly taking two documents from the Gould collection (she has pleaded not guilty). Bazzana has closely compared the two versions of the signatures page, noticing that "the one online looks normal—more fluid—while the [library's microfilm] signatures are a little more halting, suggesting they were written more slowly." He theorizes the original was replaced with a forgery.

It's a classic nightmare for archivists: how to allow documents to be used, while keeping them safe. "Every time you bring a book out, you put it at risk," notes Richard Landon, director of the University of Toronto's rare books library. He's sure his collection is "missing the odd thing," but he points out that in a library with more than 700,000 books, figuring out what's been stolen rather than simply mis-shelved can be daunting. And it's only human for staff to relax when it comes to regular users with distinguished credentials.

map archivists are still checking for losses after respected dealer Forbes Smiley III was caught stealing a US$150,000 map from Yale University last year. (He pleaded guilty on June 22.) But some institutions have now taken security to the limit. The last time Landon did research at the U.S. Library of Congress, he wasn't allowed to bring anything in. Staff provided the paper and pencil. As he exited, they pushed the pencil through a pre-punched hole in the pages and shook them to see if anything fell out.

Though Library and Archives Canada is checking its shelves, it wouldn't say if other authentic Gould items may be gone. With most of the collection now copied, researchers rarely handle the originals any longer. There is one exception, though. To honour a specific request by Gould, pianists drop by regularly to play Gould's battered and beloved piano. Even the most ingenious thief would have trouble smuggling that out. M

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ROGERS



THE FAMILY alleges negligence. The staff says it felt threatened by the patient's son

A NASTY BATTLE AT THE OLD AGE HOME

How did a small dispute at a respectable seniors' home escalate into this?

BY JONATHON GATEHOUSE • If pictures tell the story, Gerald Bargman's had a horrible ending. Photos from his final weeks show him propped up in a hospital bed, his arms covered with painful-looking sores, and body so shockingly wizened that you can see each rib, tendon and bone. By the time he died at the age of 63 on July 23, 2005, Bargman's six-foot-two frame had shrunk from 170 to well under 90 lb. He was essentially a skeleton with skin.

The list of ailments that landed him in intensive care at a Toronto hospital is long—pneumonia, respiratory failure, Crohn's disease, sepsis, an antibiotic-resistant infection—although it catalogues only a fraction of his medical problems. But it is diagnosis number seven on his final medical report—malnutrition—that his loved ones have seized upon. Proof, they say, of their allegation that one of Canada's most respected centres for geriatric care, Baycrest, let a patient starve to death in order to get back at a family that complained too loud, and too often. "It was due to negligence. It was due to neglect. It was cruel," says Carol Bargman, Gerald's sister. Depressed and isolated because administrators had restricted his son Allen's visiting privileges following a series of altercations with staff, Gerald Bargman wasted away. And Baycrest, the family alleges, did little to stop it. "At the end, he looked like he'd just come out of the concentration camps," says Carol. "He was like a poster boy for Auschwitz."

It's a provocative comparison that has stung Baycrest staff and supporters (all the more so given the facility's largely Jewish clientele and world-renowned expertise in dealing with aging Holocaust survivors). "It's obscene," says Dr. Michael Gordon, vice-president of medical services. "There are dozens of survivors here at the hospital. To suggest that we would do something to put somebody in that situation, like it was a choice, is very painful." And Gordon and his fellow administrators flatly reject suggestions that Gerald Bargman received anything less than Baycrest's usual high standard of care. But the media have taken notice, and the Ontario coroner's office is looking into the family's allegations. (The file has been sent to an outside committee of geriatric and long-term care experts, who will deliver their findings in the coming weeks.)

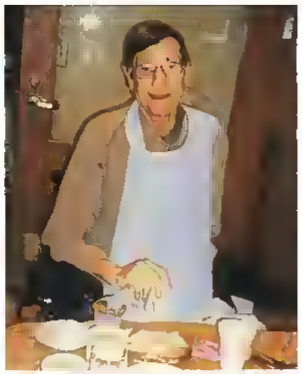
What is already clear, however, is that the relationship between the Bargman family and Baycrest went so sour that both sides now believe each other to be capable, if not guilty, of the worst. And the tale of how an all-too-routine dispute between a patient's family and staff escalated into an all-out battle involving the province, police, and probably the courts, should send a chill through both Canada's elder home industry, and anyone with a loved one in its care.

Allen Bargman's front porch isn't so much of a stone's throw as a soft lob from where his father spent his final years. His family has owned their modest bungalow on Baycrest Avenue for 55 years, long before the geriatric centre set up shop across the street. In late 2002, when the burden of caring for his father became too much—Gerald, a heavy drinker and three-pack a day smoker, suffered a massive stroke in 1998—Baycrest seemed like the perfect solution. Now its gleaming facade is a constant reminder of the unpleasantness that followed.

To hear Bargman tell it, he knows a thing or two about keeping his temper in check. A professional mascot for the past decade, the slight 43-year-old is now the man inside SpongeBob SquarePants, appearing at shopping malls across the nation. The kids get excited. Sometimes they even punch. The costume SpongeBob's mouth is right about groin level. "You have to keep your cool. You take abuse. You can't talk back," says Bargman.

He admits he did verbally lash out at a Baycrest staffer once in early 2005. He claims the nurse swore at his father, and denied him pain medication, part of a pattern of indifferent care. "I did threaten the nurse. My threat was that you are going to get what is coming to you through the proper channels." What happened afterwards was an overreaction, he says. In March 2005, Baycrest limited Bargman's visiting privileges, restricting the hours and requiring him to meet his father

'HE WAS AN EXTREMELY ILL MAN AND HAD BEEN FOR YEARS. WE'RE GOOD BUT WE'RE NOT GOD.'



AT THE END, he weighed less than 90 lb.

(TOP) TORONTO STAR/CP. COURTESY ALLEN BARGMAN



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in the lobby, under the watchful eye of a security guard. Over the next months, as Gerald Bargman's health deteriorated, the restrictions changed almost weekly, as the hospital and Bargman's lawyer—his aunt Carol—refined the "visiting plan." And frequently, Allen ran afoul of the rules, appearing at the wrong times, and in places where he wasn't supposed to be. Baycrest reacted by having him charged with trespassing on three occasions. Allen claims that Toronto police began parking outside his home and stopping him as he drove through the neighbourhood. "They had the nurses believing I would be coming up there with a gun. They put the fear of God into them," he says. "That's not me. I'm a Beatles fan. I preach peace and love."

CONFRONTATION LED TO CHARGES OF TRESPASSING. STAFF ASKED TO BE ESCORTED TO THEIR CARS.

The Bargman family also alleges that Baycrest began to treat Gerald harshly, moving him to a different ward away from his friends, and having him eat his meals in a room by himself. As he began to rapidly lose weight and weaken, says the family, the hospital ignored their repeated requests to put Gerald on a feeding tube. "To get at me, they made him suffer," says Allen.

It's a compelling story, and one that the family brought to the attention of the media. In June, just weeks before Gerald's death, the *Toronto Star*'s Rosie DiManno wrote a column that harshly criticized Baycrest for creating a "reverse-onus" situation where Allen had to prove he wasn't a threat. In October, the CTV *National News* lauded Allen as a "whistle-blower" for exposing the hospital's allegedly shoddy treatment of his family and deceased father. Both pieces relied almost exclusively on the family's version of events.

But a closer examination of the case—Allen Bargman signed waivers allowing both Baycrest and the doctors who treated Gerald in his final weeks at North York General to speak freely with *Maclean's*—reveals a much less cut-and-dried situation. Internal memos from Baycrest staff detail a series of expletive-laden confrontations between Allen and his father's nurses, dating back to the fall of 2004. "You are the queen of dumb," he allegedly screamed at one. "I got another nurse fired and you are next." Many of the accounts are backed up by multiple witnesses. The hospital files also suggest that despite Bargman's claims, he received numerous warnings about his behaviour—including a request, which was ignored, to stay away for a "72-hour cooling off period"—before his visiting privileges were limited. "People felt threatened," says Nancy Webb, Baycrest's vice-president of public affairs. "Even several of the male nurses."

Staff started asking for escorts to their cars in the parking lot, and a number sought counselling through the employee assistance program. The hospital eventually hired additional security personnel to stand guard on Gerald Bargman's ward, at a cost of more than $20,000. Months later, staff are still expressing fears. But if so many at Baycrest perceived Bargman as a threat, why then did they choose to use something as toothless as the trespass act to try to keep him at a distance? "It was a step to protect ourselves and send a message," says Webb. "And we hoped that by putting the visiting restrictions in place we'd see a change in behaviour."

Gerald Bargman's frightening weight loss also appears to have more contributing causes than just his loneliness, or the type of care he allegedly received at Baycrest. His voluminous medical records—13 large file folders—list 26 primary illnesses and dozens more secondary and tertiary ones. A series of operations to treat his Crohn's disease had left him with "short bowel syndrome," meaning his body was unable to absorb adequate vitamins and nutrients from his food. Baycrest's Gordon says a feeding tube was suggested, but the family would never agree, in part because of Gerald's express desire to keep eating "normal" food. The doctors also point to Bargman's history of depression.

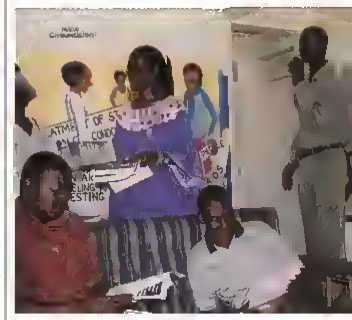
"He was an extremely ill man and had been ill for many, many years," says Dr. David Baron, chief of medicine at North York General. Malnutrition played only a small part in his death, says Baron, who had treated Bargman on numerous occasions. "We're good, but we're not God." The doctor sympathizes with the family, but says he saw no need to involve the coroner in the case.

Regardless of the outcome of the investigation, Baycrest is already contemplating making changes. Like most facilities for the aged, it has no formal mechanism to settle disputes with patient families. Now it's considering creating an outside tribunal or appointing a mediator. That's something the Bargman family would welcome, but it won't be enough to quell their concerns. Angered by what the hospital says about his conduct and his father's medical history—"It's just out-and-out bald-faced lies"—Allen and his aunt plan to launch a wrongful death suit. Still mourning the loss of his father, he remains determined to push matters as far as they can go. "The last six months of my dad's life were terrible. They kept us apart and he cried for me all the time," he says. "I want to make sure this doesn't happen to anyone else." M

LARRY KROTZ

MAKING THE CUT

Could circumcision dramatically lower the rate of HIV in Africa?



THE KISUMU CLINIC has Canadian funding

BY LARRY KROTZ • For five years, Dr. Stephen Moses from the University of Manitoba and Dr. Robert Bailey from the University of Illinois have been circumcising young men of the Luo tribe in western Kenya. They wanted to see if and how this would protect them from HIV infection. On June 27, at a meeting in Washington, the two scientists will learn whether their research, which seemed controversial or even peripheral when it was first conceived, will be allowed to continue or be cut short a year early. A panel called a data safety monitoring board (DSMB), made up of scientists from both North America and Africa who meet annually to oversee all such clinical trials, will examine their preliminary data (numbers Moses and Bailey have not seen) and decree the fate of the project. If the project is stopped, in a bizarre—or even ironic—twist, it will simply be because the news is just too good.

With $300,000 annually from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and US$1.2 million from the U.S. National Institutes of Health, the researchers, together with their Kenyan partner, the University of Nairobi, have been combing the markets and fishing villages around the town of Kisumu to recruit 2,800 young men aged 18 to 24. On half of them they performed surgery while requiring the rest to remain uncircumcised. Then they asked both groups to stay in touch over a period of two years.

At the outset, the research was deemed a shot in the dark, yet plausible in west Africa, where cultural circumcision practices are

more extensive, HIV/AIDS rates, they noted, are lower. But quickly, the strategy of male circumcision has leapt onto centre stage as the latest and potentially most effective tool of AIDS prevention. So effective, in fact, some suggest it doesn't even require the full imprimatur of scientific certainty. A year ago, a similar study conducted in South Africa's Soweto township by French scientists was halted by its data safety monitoring board when preliminary data showed the discrepancy in HIV infections between their two cohorts to be an astonishing 63 per cent. The Catch 22 was that it seemed unethical to require the mandatory control group to remain without the potentially life-saving operation even for the relatively short period of the study. "It would not be moral," declared the DSMB, "in the light of such astounding data, to continue with a group from whom you were withholding the possibility of becoming circumcised."

Moses and Bailey, at the time not so far along as the South Africans, feared their data safety monitoring board might follow suit. They were reassured this would not be the case, a recognition, seemingly, that somewhere a clinical trial needed to go all the way through to its conclusion. If mass circumcision of African men was going to become a strategy in the battle against AIDS, one had to think there should be at least one completed trial in order to confirm scientific certainty.

Yet as they head toward this year's meeting, the pressure is on again, so much so that Moses and Bailey are taking nothing for granted. AIDS officials are said to have prepared two press releases to cover either eventuality after the meeting that will look at both the Kisumu study and another funded by the National Institutes of Health and Bill Gates in Uganda. In the year since the South Africa project was halted, more information has come in at a steady clip. Broad publicity was given, for example, to a study in Uganda that showed that male circumcision might well protect women. Out of more than 300 couples where the man infected the woman with HIV, it was found that only 44 were infected by circumcised men. And the Moses-Bailey team themselves, after examining foreskin tissue sent back to Winnipeg and Chicago, published an article in the *American Journal of Clinical Pathology* with their findings that two things, a lack of protective keratin on the inner surface plus the presence of high densities of Langerhans cells, determined as receptor cells, make the foreskin itself a portal of HIV entry.

Running a clinical trial in a far distant corner of Kenya has been a challenging enterprise, with daily problems requiring innovation and inventiveness. When recruiting the right kinds of high-risk subjects in the maze of the poorly mapped city became an issue, one of the Manitoba researchers, Ian Maclean, downloaded a satellite photograph of the area with enough definition to reveal individual streets and houses, alleyways and huts. The enlarged photo was posted on the clinic wall like a gigantic map on which recruiters could tick off the corners they had covered. The matter of persuading their subjects seemed a challenge at the outset, a cultural intrusion on people where circumcision is not part of their practice. Yet in the end, young men desperate to try anything to stop HIV/AIDS in its tracks were willing to have the procedure. Maintaining contact with 2,800 subjects and following them over a lengthy 24-month period proved a larger challenge. They lost track, Moses admits, of 15 per cent, "which is about what we expected."

IF THE CLINICAL TRIAL IS ENDED, IT WILL SIMPLY BE BECAUSE THE NEWS ON AIDS IS JUST TOO GOOD



AT A MEDICAL CLINIC in Kisumu, Kenya, 2,800 young men aged 18 to 24 have considered circumcision

Something called "adverse effects" was another matter. The U.S. member of the team, Dr. Bob Bailey, seems satisfied. "Nobody died," he said. "Nobody's penis fell off." Two per cent was their target for incidents of adverse effects; the worst cases were things like stitches opening up before complete healing had taken place. One fellow, Bailey recounted, had sex two times within eight days of his surgery, something he had been adamantly counselled against. Another rode his bicycle home after surgery, which did him no good.

Though all the surgeries were completed last September, about half of the young men, 10 months later, have still not completed their follow-up. Another year is required to get these authoritative results. Whether the researchers will be granted that—or whether the preliminary numbers are just so good that it can't ethically be permitted—is what they are about to find out.

TONICS

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LARRY KROTZ

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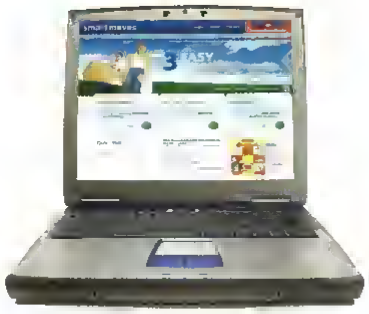
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CANADA POST POSTES CANADA

From anywhere...to anyone

TALK ABOUT A BLIND DATE

I wouldn't have to worry about my hair. But what if he felt my face?

BY REBECCA ECKLER • I went on a blind date with a blind man recently. I had only ever been on one blind date, and that was almost a decade ago. But I was more nervous about this blind date with a man who was actually blind.

The date was with an author named Ryan Knighton, whose memoir about being blind, *Cockeyed*, has just been published. Sure, I knew it wouldn't matter what I wore, how my hair looked, whether or not I had a bagel seed stuck in my teeth. And for a moment, the thought of not worrying about my appearance was liberating. How often, as a woman, does that happen? I am jealous of Ryan's wife, who I figure will never have to worry about getting wrinkles, or her husband checking out women with big boobs. But I had never met a blind person before, had no idea how to deal with a blind person. I was terrified.

Two days before we were to meet, I was kicking myself for ever having invited Ryan out. But I loved his memoir—how he went from being a seeing child and teenager to a blind adult who travelled the world.

"Please, you have to come with me," I begged my friend Jasmine, one of whose close friends is in a wheelchair, another can't move her arms. She at least would know what to do. But Jasmine was going out of town.

"Do I take his arm?" I asked her. "No," she said. "You do not help unless they ask for help." Besides that advice, I had only Knighton's memoir to go on. In *Cockeyed*, he describes going to restaurants and asking waiters where the washroom is. The worst answer they can give is, "It's over there." How can he possibly know what "over there" means?

But even worse, he writes, are the overly kind people who insist on accompanying him into washrooms, pushing him into a stall, and then waiting for him to finish. I sent Ryan what I hoped was a funny email. "I promise I will not walk into the washroom with you." Knighton wrote back, "That's half the fun. You could take me into the women's washroom and I wouldn't know the difference."

Clearly, he was good-natured. But I worried. I just knew I would do or say something inappropriate. What if he felt my face, for instance? Isn't that what blind people do?

I arrived at the cocktail party fashionably late, having promised myself I wouldn't drink. After two glasses of wine, I can barely walk myself home. How would I ever guide a blind man around, tipsy?

I saw Knighton immediately, sitting on a chair with his white cane, sipping on a beer. He has a shaved head and tattoos up and down his arms (one is of the three blind mice). Screw it, I thought, taking my first glass of wine. Everyone knows that on a blind date alcohol helps. The party was safe enough. It was small. There were only so many walls he could walk into, I figured. "I like the sound of your bracelet," he told me. I had bought the Indian-style bracelet, which jingled with charms, earlier that afternoon because I loved it. After his compliment, I felt stupid for wearing it. What if Ryan thought I had worn it only so he could find me in the crowd, like a cat wearing a bell around its neck?

After the party, I wanted to go to the Drake Hotel, an artsy/pretentious converted hotel that is now a hipster scene, because I thought he'd enjoy it, but did it really matter where we went? He couldn't see, right? Still, in an attempt to be cool about his blindness, I wanted to take him to a cool place like he was just another friend and this was just another night out.

The doorman at the Drake didn't make us line up (perk of going out with a blind guy?) and we headed upstairs to the busy patio, him holding my elbow, me thinking, "This was a stupid idea." But it wasn't. People see a blind man coming, and immediately seats are available (perk of going out with a blind guy?). We drank, drank some more and then some more. Maybe it was because of the drinks but I became a pretty damn good guide. He asked what the crowd looked like and I described it to him. By the middle of our night out, I was completely comfortable, which is more than most people can say about blind dates. "There are stairs up now," I'd say. Or he'd ask, "Where's my beer?" And I'd pick it up and hand it to him like I was passing the salt.

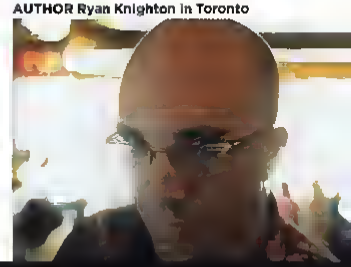
Then the inevitable happened. He asked me to take him to the washroom. I broke out in a sweat. But it was easy. People clear out of the way when they see him, or rather his cane. He's like Moses parting the Red Sea.

I also had to use the washroom, and went really fast, to make sure I came out before he did so I could lead him back to our table. Of course, I didn't tell him this.

He insisted on paying. I insisted on paying. But he insisted harder, and partly I let him pay because I didn't want him to think I was pity-paying because he's blind.

After that, there was another party Ryan had been invited to. At 2 a.m., after a night of laughing, it was time to go home. He was staying at a friend's place, which was on the way to my house. Really, it was. I'm not just saying that because he's blind and I wanted to make sure he got home okay. Cabs flew by me. "Dude," I told him. "No cab is stopping." "Use my cane," he said and handed it to me. Drunkenly, I waved it out on the street. Three seconds later we were in a cab. (Perk of going out with a blind guy?) When we got to where he was staying, he got out of the cab and walked up to the dark porch. I told the cab driver to wait until he got inside. You could say I did this because he was blind and I was worried. Or you could say that I'm a good date, and a good date waits until his or her date is safely inside, blind or not. M

AUTHOR Ryan Knighton in Toronto



WOULD HE THINK I WORE THE JANGLY BRACELET SO HE COULD HEAR ME?

FERNANDO MORALES/GLOBE AND MAIL



INDIA: MAKING MONEY WITH HOUSEHOLD ASSETS

A shortage of single women in India has inspired rural husbands to rent out their wives to affluent lovelorn men. One farmer in the state of Gujarat rented his spouse to a landowner for $150 a month, big money for a man whose income averages about $25 a month. The wife is expected to keep house for the renting husband, care for him, and sleep with him. Rich men can even accessorize their rented wives with rented children.

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ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY

Amidst the death threats, Chris Alexander tries to fix the problems of Afghanistan

BY SALLY ARMSTRONG / PHOTOGRAPHY BY LANA SLEZIC

Christopher Alexander is in the eye of the storm that is Afghanistan today. As a United Nations deputy special representative of the secretary-general here, his responsibilities include security, governance and human rights. And by all accounts, the Canadian diplomatic wunderkind is in for a long, hot summer. The Taliban insurgency in the south is ever bolder. The poppy harvest is on track to rack up a record US$8 billion. The UN program to disband the warlords' illegally armed militias has stalled. Suffice to say June has been the worst month of President Hamid Karzai's life, and the busiest for Alexander.

"Failure is definitely an option," he says. "This is a fragile state." But Alexander, 37, scoffs at the notion that recent events have made Afghanistan akin to Baghdad. "Those who say that simply haven't read enough history. Unlike the Baghdad green zone, the streets of Kabul are safer in the last six months than they have been at any time during the transition." And the usually affable diplomat is affronted by the suggestion that nation building is beyond Afghans. "That is quite frankly not the case. We need to dispense with these insulting assumptions."

In the meantime, though, this fractious nation is consuming hundreds of millions of Canadian tax dollars, with almost $100 million per year pledged through to 2010-11. On top of that, military operations in or related to Afghanistan since 9/11 have consumed almost $2 billion. Canadians are asking tough questions about the return on this massive investment. But Alexander is confident that if the international community stays the course and does what's necessary to set conditions for peace, a democratic Afghanistan "will emerge and economic growth will be spectacular by the standards of the last half-century."

Alexander's job is to stay in touch with the principal players and set an agenda everyone can live with. Not an easy task given who's involved: President Karzai, highly visible in his Persian lamb hat and flamboyant cape; the Americans, who are currently in charge with their Operation Enduring Freedom; NATO, soon to take over the lead, with Canada and its 2,300 soldiers possibly taking over command of the coalition before fall; and about 31 million Afghans who hope Alexander and his UN mission get it right.

Stickhandling such an experiment in nation building is Alexander's forte. He's in close touch with Canadian Brig.-Gen. David Fraser, who is in charge of the regional command of NATO in the southern provinces, including Kandahar. Fraser, who sees Kandahar as the strategic centre of gravity, says, "The situation is active but the sky is not falling." His British chief of staff, Lt.-Col. Chris Vernon, adds, "We're pushing troops into places we've never been before. It's not a cakewalk."

Neither is Alexander's job. He works 14-hour days and often deals with death threats, some of them quite credible. He travels with bodyguards in an armoured vehicle from his office in the UN compound to meetings scattered about Kabul, and the charming home he shares with his partner Hedvig Boserup, a cover-girl beauty who came to Afghanistan as an officer in the Danish army and met Alexander when she took a job at the UN. (She is now a program officer with a non-governmental organization that helps the private sector get businesses running in the country.) An outdoor enthusiast, Alexander has had to limit his jogging to an indoor track, but thumbs his nose at security some weekends and goes hiking with friends at Kapisa in the famed Hindu Kush.

He also has an evacuation plan that can be enacted in a nanosecond. In short, he loves being in this place at this time. "Despite what you see on TV, things are happening here," he says. "There is an appetite for change, and change is possible. Afghans have come to that conclusion after trying so many other options, most of them violent."

IT'S EARLY MORNING, and Alexander is just back from a 10-day trip out of the country, defending his budget at the UN in New York City and attending the Young Global Leaders summit in Vancouver. He's trying to get up to speed when he realizes that one of the UN's Afghan programs—the highly prized Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG)—has gone pear-shaped.

Alexander quickly calls a meeting, leaves the compound and heads over to the Japanese embassy to see the ambassador, who is charged with fulfilling the DIAG promise made just five months ago in the heralded Afghanistan Compact. The ambassador tells him the bad news: the target for disarming militias set for the end of 2007 cannot be met. They need to slow down, regroup. Alexander picks his way through the file, asks for a meeting with First Deputy Minister of Defence Yusuf Nuristani, his DIAG interlocutor, to get the facts. But first he needs to talk with his chief of staff, Sergiy Illarionov.

They run through half a dozen issues. On the growing insurgency, Alexander tells him, "The secretary general's report is due in September. The part about the insurgency has to be done very carefully. I don't want anyone saying they weren't told." On the increasing worry about security at the UN compound, which unfortunately is a direct neighbour of the coalition forces headquarters, he wants more action. "Everyone is waiting for the big bomb. Until the reinforcement of the compound is complete, that building [on the perimeter] should not be occupied."

Illarionov weaves another concern into the morning mix. "We're in trouble. I don't think the majority of the population is ready for changes like the newly appointed government telling village elders about projects they haven't been consulted about. All they see is corruption and the daily routine of fighting for power in the government." It's a subject that's on everyone's mind.

The clock is ticking. Alexander is late for another meeting. On the way to see Nuristani, he explains why it's taking so long to subdue the Taliban. While in New York, the former UN eminence grise in Afghanistan, Lakhdar Brahimi, told him that the coalition should have finished off the Taliban four years ago when the UN took over. At that time the freshly defeated Taliban were disorganized, disillusioned and scattered. Now they are better organized, have access to technology, and easy contact anywhere in the world via conference calls. Alexander says he can name 100 Taliban commanders who strut around the streets of Quetta, Pakistan, with impunity, and float in and out of Afghanistan at will.

"Part of this story is about suicide bombs and improvised explosive devices [IEDs], but part of it is a story of safe havens and training camps across the border," he says.

But while Afghans have a history of staring down invaders—the British and the Russians—for many, the Taliban is not an enemy.





'DESPITE WHAT YOU SEE ON TV, THERE'S APPETITE FOR CHANGE'

KABUL SCENES At King Nadirsahe's shrine (opposite), playing soccer, buying bread



ALEXANDER and his partner, Hedvig Boserup, in the garden of their house in Kabul

The commanders may now be operating from outside Afghanistan, but most Taliban are Pashtun, the dominant ethnic group in the region, and they have considerable, maybe even increasing, support inside Afghanistan. But Alexander adamantly points out that the population gave a massive vote of confidence to the government in the presidential election. "People want peace, and know they can only get it through these institutions," he says. "This chapter in Afghanistan's brutal, colourful history is different."

Afghanistan also played a pivotal role in another, larger story. Alexander, who spent six years in Russia—the last three in the No. 2 post at the Canadian Embassy in Moscow—is fascinated by the former Soviet Union. "The defining showdown of the 20th century was the confrontation between the Warsaw Pact and those who favour free markets and democracy," he says. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, and Moscow's unsuccessful nine-year battle to subdue the country, was part of that. By the time all Soviet troops had been withdrawn in 1989, the U.S.S.R. was two years away from dissolution, a process speeded by the Afghan war's drain on the economy and popular antipathy toward the conflict. "You can only understand why the Soviet Union is no longer and Russia has arisen on its ruins by understanding the history of Afghanistan," Alexander says. A stable and democratic Afghanistan would be a fitting final chapter to that saga.

On the streets of the capital, though, stability seems far away. If you were to stop 100 people at the bazaar in Kabul and ask them how they think things are going, 80 per cent would say, "It's getting worse, the police are corrupt, I don't trust the government and my life is not getting better despite the promises made to me." Alexander says that underlying the pessimism is fear of the Taliban agenda. "The Taliban are about revenge. They never accepted defeat. They're about drugs, their operations are financed by drug barons. What's more, their values have been rejected by Afghans and the international community. People don't want it, but it's sold to them down the barrel of a gun."

The fragility of the state was tested on May 29 when Kabul erupted in violence after a terrible traffic accident due to a brake failure on an American military vehicle. Rumours swept through the city that U.S. forces were killing Afghans, people took to the streets, including spoilers, opportunists and criminals who looted stores, trashed NGO offices and burned buildings. The police were cowed into paralysis, while some Afghans said the incident only showed that Karzai wasn't really in control.

Alexander bristles at any suggestion that the U.S. is running the show. "If you're implying that this is a puppet state run by Americans, that's just not true. Karzai gets a lot of advice and extreme lobbying that's not always wholesome, from groups within the country as well as the international community, but when the cabinet meets or the parliament is in session, the U.S. is not there. It simply can't work that way in Afghanistan."

But as his car jostles through the chaotic Kabul traffic, he acknowledges that "on the day of the riot, things clearly slipped out of control. There is discontent and civil unrest in Kabul today. The crime problem is bigger than the terrorist one due to corrupt, poorly equipped police, the drug trade and poverty." It's a situation exacerbated by the fact that Kabul's population has exploded from 750,000 to three million. There's high unemployment, not enough housing, and the electricity system is an on-again, off-again nuisance. And Alexander isolates a single factor that overshadows all other issues. "Half the population now is under the age of 15," he says. "Their hopes and expectations are high, but their disappointment and alienation are acute. They perceive the country to be poorly run by the government or by the international partners."

AT THE AFGHAN DEFENCE MINISTRY, past the intricate array of barriers outside and the soldiers with bayonetted rifles at the ready, Alexander greets Nuristani and comes straight to the point. "Which warlords or jihadists are advising the president against DIAG?"

"I am alone from the Afghan side," Nuristani tells him. "We are in a quagmire." He's pessimistic and explains that the warlords are keeping their armed militias; they call it "strengthening security forces." Alexander reassures him. "Without you, it would have stopped completely. The dynamic will change. This is the hardest time now."

Back at the UN compound, he calls for a meeting of his top advisers to thrash out the DIAG crisis. "DIAG is about ending the activities of these groups that collect illegal taxes, smuggle drugs and use extortion on the villagers," he declares. "They'll deny it, but we know beyond doubt that they do." He tells his staff that DIAG is the most popular initiative in the country, and that it must get running again. His team responds with a litany of evidence that underscores the failure of the program. They argue about whether the upcoming summit on DIAG in Tokyo on July 5 ought to be scrapped.

But Alexander is decisive. "It would do more harm to cancel than to proceed, so we'll proceed." Then he tells a staff member he needs a speech for Tokyo "with soaring rhetoric—the greatest hits in disarmament."

His advisers want to know that Karzai's support for DIAG is undiminished. Otherwise, they say, there's no point in proceeding either with the conference, or the program. After an hour of debate, Alexander summarizes the points. "DIAG is about doing what the people want, which is to get the commanders off their backs. We don't have the luxury of debating it. Our job is to help implement it." For now, he says, they'll move a little more slowly in the provinces where the program has been launched, and wait before launching it in others. The meeting is adjourned. It's 8 p.m.

Karzai is in fact out of the country this day. He's in China, attending a meeting of the Shanghai Co-operation Organization, a little-known collection of Afghanistan's neighbours that's taking on an increasingly important position. Its stated goal is to tighten ties by furthering co-operation in security, energy and regional affairs. Started five years ago as an alliance of China, Russia and four former Soviet republics, the organization has now given observer status to India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan. That's left Afghanistan virtually surrounded by countries that may have an agenda dissimilar to the U.S. plan for the country.

Alexander soft-pedals any potential threat, and concerns that the Shanghai organization, which includes half of the world's population, could evolve into an alternative to NATO and the European Union. "The political and economic future of this part of Asia depends on these countries knitting themselves together in a way that reflects a modern economy and globalization through Afghanistan," he says. He acknowledges that "There are players in the region who are uncomfortable with the U.S. presence in Afghanistan, but it isn't contested in any fundamental way. It's not just about the U.S."

Of more immediate concern is Karzai's sudden additions to recent public service appointments. Eighty-six crucial leadership positions were filled on the basis of merit rather than patronage, including the chiefs of police in the southern provinces. But at the last minute, 14 individuals were added to the list who did not meet the merit criteria. One of them, the newly appointed chief of police in Kabul, is Amanullah Gozar, a former mujahedeen muscleman alleged to have committed so many crimes he'll be in the upcoming report from the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. "We were disappointed if not scandalized by the additions to the list," Alexander says.

Another worry is the Afghan National Army, which is also on his radar. He doesn't deny rumours of troops looting and confiscating property, of defections and discontent. "It's a new army," he says. "It'll take years of additional training to be able to sustain itself." For now, Afghan army regulars are dependent on coalition forces for air support, proper transportation and logistics training. Often they take the brunt of the battle. "Afghans are extremely patriotic about their borders and the security of their own territory, but they certainly don't have the Lav IIIs and G Wagons the Canadian troops move in," Alexander says. "They're in pickup trucks, so if they're ambushed, casualties are high."



He has strong praise for Canada. "One thing Canada has done particularly well is to make interventions that are time-sensitive." The electoral process, for example, when people weren't even talking about when elections would happen, Canada launched voter registration projects. It was the first country to put money into the containment of heavy weapons, and start thinking about how ammunition should be dealt with. "These were very early investments that paid off," Alexander says.

IT'S THE END of another long day. The UN compound is nearly deserted but for the lamp that still burns in Alexander's office. Even his two cellphones have stopped ringing.

Asked about human rights in Afghanistan, he leans back in his chair, rubs his forehead with both hands, and says, "This is a tough one." Abuses were catastrophic during the Taliban regime. And for women in particular, this is a country in desperate need of reform. Alexander says the single biggest achievement has been the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. Under the leadership of Dr. Sima Samar, it demanded, and got, a "transitional justice" process under which a report about past crimes and accountability has been prepared. "It was Chris Alexander, when he was Canadian ambassador, who helped push the government to make our work happen," Samar says.

But the report has not yet been released, and both Samar and Alexander are irked by its apparent suppression. "Security, justice and accountability need to go together for peace," Samar says. "Stability here will help security in the whole world. Canada won't be safe if Afghanistan is not safe." She's got an avid supporter in Alexander, but, he cau

'THIS IS NOT JUST A MILITARY CAMPAIGN, IT'S THE FATE OF A COUNTRY THAT'S AT STAKE. IT'S WITHIN REACH.'



ALEXANDER holds his lucky prayer beads, in his UN office in Kabul (right)

tions. "We may never in our lifetime see Afghans meeting international standards of human rights for women."

The facts are clear: there will be no rule of law while the drug trafficking networks remain powerful, and the insurgency will not be overcome as long as opium plays such a strong role. Nor will the rural economy recover as long as farmers are, essentially, prisoners of their opium crops. But as Alexander packs his briefcase, he says the challenges can be met. "This is not just a military campaign—it's the fate of a country that's at stake. Our objective isn't to simply invest well-equipped forces under strong leadership into the eye of the storm that is Kandahar. It's to support a transition from 25 years of war to long-lasting peace. It's within reach if countries like Canada remain. The consequences of leaving the job unfinished would be catastrophic." M

HONOUR ROLL
Heroes & Builders

'I THINK THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION TO THE VICTIMS' FAMILIES NOW IS, "COULD THE SAME THING HAPPEN AGAIN?" '—JOHN MAJOR, COMMISSIONER OF THE AIR INDIA INQUIRY

TIM ARMSTRONG
AIN'T NO RIVER WIDE ENOUGH

Just hours after hurricane Katrina hit the U.S. Gulf Coast last year, Tim Armstrong was already on the phone with emergency response teams in the area, inquiring if there was anything the Vancouver Urban Search and Rescue Team could do. A day later, the 46-member team—which has since become a model for other Canadian cities to copy—was the first on the ground in St. Bernard Parish, plucking survivors from their flooded homes. During their week in Louisiana, the ream, made up largely of policemen, firemen and paramedics (all specially trained volunteers), saved 119 people. "When I look back it's exhausting thinking about it," says Armstrong, 46, a team leader. "We were running for a week on pure adrenalin." His proudest moment when the local fire chief told the team to raise the Canadian flag up one of the ladder trucks.

CATRIONA LE MAY DOAN
DOES SHE EVEN HAVE A SLOWER GEAR?

Catriona Le May Doan retired from speed skating three years ago, but the two-time Olympic gold medallist exclaims, "I have more on my plate than ever!" Le May Doan, 35, serves as a director of the Canadian Sport Centre and the Canadian Olympic Development Association, having just finished a three-year stint with the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Winter Games. She's an ambassador for Right to Play, which promotes youth sports in developing countries, and is similarly affiliated with KidSport. Add to that commitments to the Mustard Seed and Youth in Motion Education foundations, Samaritan's Purse, World Vision and the spina bifida association and this new mom is booked. It's no wonder she was honoured with the Order of Canada last year. "With skating, once the training was done, the priority was resting," she says. "Now rest is further down the line."

KELLY DAMPHOUSSE
TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT TERRORISTS

Like most Canadians who work in the United States, Kelly Damphousse hears it all the time. *Your country is a haven for terrorists who sneak across the border. Didn't the 9/11 hijackers come from Canada?* "It's part of any Canadian's job who lives in the States to dispel those myths in a friendly way—which is the Canadian way," says Damphousse, 43. Having reliable stats certainly helps. Since 1994, the native of Lac La Biche, Alta., who teaches sociology at the University of Oklahoma, has worked closely with another professor to compile the *American Terrorism Study*, an exhaustive database of names, dates and indictments that spans two decades worth of FBI terror investigations. It has proven to be an invaluable tool, studied by lawenforcement agencies in the hope that past patterns may help them predict the timing of a future attack. As for a Canadian pattern, there isn't one. "Maybe one person," Damphousse says, "has some kind of connection to Canada."

ORIM MEIKLE
WITNESS THE POWER OF PRAYER PATROL

About two years ago, Orim Meikle, the founding pastor of Toronto's Rhema Christian Ministries, buried a congregation member's son who had been killed in a shooting. That was the day, he says, that the city's gun violence came to his church's door and he decided to fight back. Meikle, 38, now hosts a local radio show focused on youth violence. He's soft-spoken but charismatic, and never minces words when it comes to the black community's problems. He also leads prayer patrols, where hundreds of people "walk right into areas where people have been shot." As well as running youth education and employment programs, his church—which has grown from 20 people in 1999 to more than 2,000 under his leadership—focuses on "building healthy and strong family structures," Meikle says. "If it's a war on violence, we should be on the front lines."

FROM LEFT CP JANICE HEARD NO CREDIT NO CREDIT CP NO CREDIT RICK EGLINTON/TORONTO STAR

JOHN MAJOR
PM'S RETIREMENT GIFT TO JUDOE: AIR INDIA

John Major got a call from Stephen Harper earlier this year asking him if he was up for a challenge. The former Supreme Court justice, living in Calgary and only a month into his retirement, accepted the Prime Minister's offer to head up the long-awaited inquiry into the Air India disaster. As commissioner of the inquiry, which started in June, Major, 75, has the giant task of bringing some closure to the troubled 20-year investigation into what was the worst act of terrorism in aviation history before 9/11 (329 people died when a bomb exploded on Air India Flight 182 in 1985). "I think the most important question for the victims' families now," he says, "and it's one that at best can only be partially answered, is 'Could the same thing happen again?' " In all likelihood, the inquiry will be long (at least a year), but Major says he always knew he'd be working post-retirement. "I can't paint so I don't have any real competing hobbies," he quips. "This seemed like a worthwhile project."

JENN BRENNER
IT TAKES A WELL-TRAINED VILLAGE

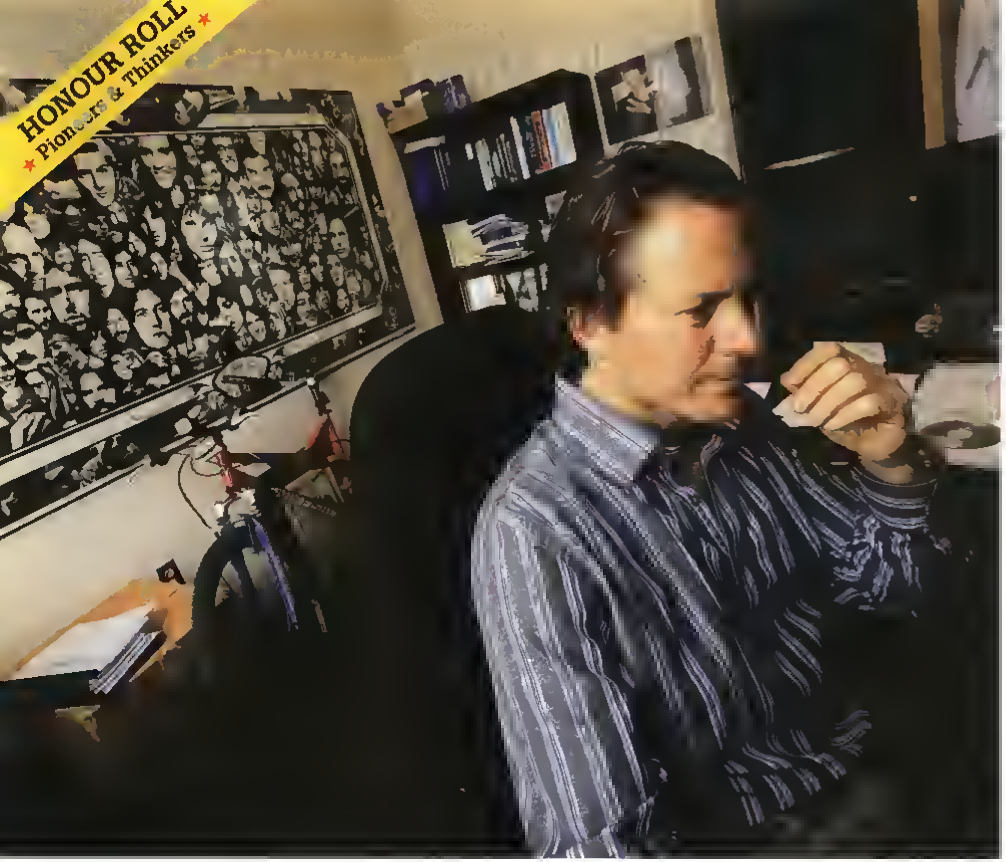
In southwestern Uganda, where one in five children die before they reach their fifth birthday, Jenn Brenner is making a difference. The 35-year-old pediatrician, who works at the Alberta Children's Hospital and as an assistant professor at the University of Calgary, is setting up community health programs for children in the African country. Brenner's program trains local volunteers—mostly mothers—in poverty-stricken villages to recognize ailing children and ensure they receive treatment at a health care centre. "When these women are empowered," says Brenner, "they can instigate quite a bit of change." Already, children are receiving medical care faster and more often, and the area has a higher immunization rate. And Brenner recently received a CIDA grant worth $1.4 million over six years. "We hope to triple the area we reach in the next two years."

RON JAMIESON
THERE'S NOTHING LIKE A PROUD HOMEOWNER

Before stepping down as a Bank of Montreal senior vice president last fall, Ron Jamieson, a Mohawk from the Six Nations reserve in southern Ontario, pioneered a program that injected more than $50 million in home mortgage-style financing into 22 of Canada's nearly 600 reserves. Jamieson's program gets around the Indian Act prohibition that prevents outright home ownership on reserves. Reserve residents who borrow from the bank to build or upgrade houses hold a certificate that is the next best thing—they can sell the certificate like a title, or will it to children. The bank accepts that any borrowers who can't make payments will be kicked out and the home will be made available to a resident who can keep them up. It works. "We see a terrific upswing in the quality and care of homes," says Jamieson, who touted the model at Vancouver's World Urban Forum last week. "It's almost miraculous."

BRAD AND BARRY COLLINS
SMALL-TOWN BROTHERS, BIG-TIME GAMERS

Dumb persistence is what Brad Collins credits for his and younger brother Barry's imminent debut as international tutors of video game making. Growing up in Powell River, a British Columbia community of 20,000, the brothers taught themselves video game development. They soon became go-to guys for gaming geeks in online communities—which got them thinking about starting a forum for people who, like themselves, had limited support. "We had to learn the hard way, and it's not nice to learn the hard way," says Brad, 23. They received $150,000 in seed money earlier this year from Microsoft, partnered with organizations that offer free computer access in remote regions of Canada and Latin America, and started Project Locus—which will launch a new community this summer providing online game-building instruction and tutorial. They're hoping to build computer literacy and employability. "It will engage people who want to be creative," says Brad, 23. "We don't imagine that everyone is going to become a game developer, but they'll learn how to use the computer. It's like someone who likes comic books and along the way learns to read and write."



HOPE, HATE AND HANS

Hans Keirstead has made partially paralyzed rats walk again. Some day, he may be able to do the same for humans, if he's allowed to.

BY KEN MACQUEEN / PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANDY HUFFAKER

Hans Keirstead is learning to surf. It's harder than it looks, he says. Maybe it was inevitable, living as he does in Irvine, Calif., a freeway exit or two from Orange County's finest beaches. At 39, he still looks the part of a southern California surfer, or so he's been told often enough. He's got a kind of disheveled grace about him, and a fluid athleticism which, in fact, owes more to a black belt in tae kwon do than to wave riding. His new wife, Niki Keirstead, raised in San Diego, is the real surfer in the family. She's also a neuroscientist, as is her husband. Hans S. Keirstead, Ph.D., associate professor, Reeve-Irvine Research Center, University of California at Irvine, dude.

Surfing is just another challenge for Keirstead, like writing rock songs, or mastering a new recipe for pork tenderloin in wine reduction (delicious!). Or playing a lead role in successfully convincing California taxpayers to invest US$3 billion in human embryonic stem cell research—even though the religious right in general, and President George W. Bush in particular, consider it a mortal sin. Or (how's this for a goal?) his all-consuming belief that someday—maybe someday soon—his work will restore mobility for those who are paralyzed with spinal injuries or stricken with multiple sclerosis. He has already made partially paralyzed rats walk again, using derivatives of human embryonic stem cells. The next stop—as early as next spring—is trying the same therapy in human trials.

Challenge—exploring the mystery and wonder of the central nervous system—is what got him into neurobiology. The first time we talked, back in January 2000, after a winter afternoon he'd spent operating on rats in a battered old laboratory at the University of British Columbia, he told me that the beauty of the brain is this: "I know I'll have a full lifetime of unanswered questions."

That afternoon was one of Keirstead's last at UBC. He'd answered one nagging question. After long weeks of doubt he was leaving B.C. for California. At the time, much of his research at UBC was made possible by Rick Hansen, the wheelchair athlete whose foundation has raised more than $178 million for spinal cord research. Then, in a manner of speaking, Superman came calling. Keirstead was invited to join the new Reeve-Irvine Research Center. The center is named for its founders: Christopher Reeve—the late actor who famously played Superman, and who became a champion of spinal cord research after being paralyzed in a riding accident—and philanthropist Joan Irvine Smith, of Irvine's founding family. The dilemma over whether to leave caught Keirstead between two wounded heroes: Hansen and Reeve. But back in those brain-drain days, UBC couldn't match the huge increase in start-up research funds that Keirstead was offered. "I wanna fix spinal cords," he said then. "If I really want to fix spinal cords, I'm going south. And that's it."

Fast forward to this perfect spring morning at the University of California campus at Irvine. The desk in Keirstead's cramped office is heaped with grant applications, the mother's milk of research. A mountain bike leans against a wall dominated by a brilliant 2.5-m-long portrait of the greats of rock 'n' roll, rendered in pen and ink by his artist brother, Michael. The past six-plus years have been an epic ride, with no end in sight. No one is walking away from their wheelchairs yet, but even Keirstead at his most optimistic couldn't have predicted all that's come to pass. He's gained fame, fortune and notoriety, far beyond the usual lot of an academic researcher. Most of all, he's riding a wave of "some cool, cool science," as he and the rest of the biomedical world struggle to keep ahead of the thunderous potential of human embryonic stem cell research, and the legal and ethical issues churned up by their use. "Stem cells," he says, "have brought me into a political and ethical world I never thought I'd belong to."

They've made him a symbol, especially in California, of hope, and occasionally of hate. Nowhere has the debate over stem cell research raged more passionately than here. In 2001, Bush stopped all federal funds to create new stem cell lines or to support research. California, with a rich and vibrant biotech industry, moved to circumvent the ban with various private and state-funded initiatives. Don Reed of Fremont, Calif., the father of a son paralyzed in a college football game, inspired a state law that has raised millions for spinal cord research, with some of the money going to Keirstead's work at Reeve-Irvine. Kelrstead, this uppity Canadian import, testified at state Senate hearings on the issue in 2002. Then, in 2004, he waded into the bruising public debate over state Proposition 71, an initiative to invest $3 billion to fund stem cell research through a new California Institute for Regenerative Medicine.

Christopher Reeve, shortly before he died, videotaped a heartfelt appeal in support of the initiative. Keirstead and many others spoke out at public forums. He repeatedly showed a powerful video of his paralyzed rats regaining their mobility. Even some fellow scientists condemned him for that because the experiment itself had yet to be published in a peer-reviewed journal. That has since happened, in the leading *Journal of Neuroscience*. And, as important in Keirstead's view, three other labs, one of them in Canada, have independently confirmed his work using different cell sources. In essence it shows that cells engineered to produce myelin, a fatty insulating sheath, will migrate to and re-insulate damaged, shorted-out sections of spinal cord. Restoring myelin is a process akin to taping up a frayed extension cord, restoring the electrical signals from brain to body. Researchers see potential for other stem cell derivatives, perhaps producing insulin for diabetics or regrowing damaged heart muscle. Keirstead has no regrets about using the video in the debate. "People needed to see the potential of the cells," he says, "I had one, not the only one, but one very good example. So, I decided to get on the stage. Many, many stages."

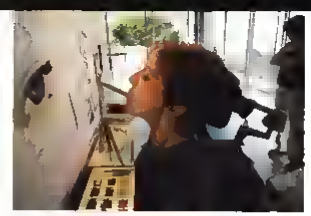
Proposition 71 passed with 59 per cent of the vote. It remains tied up in court appeals financed by the religious right. And Keirstead remains a target. "Ethics interrupted" screamed a headline over a passionate attack on Keirstead published in *Christianity Today*. A condemnation of the "wicked" lies of Keirstead and others ran in *LifeNews.com*, a pro-life website, under the heading "Embryonic stem cell research scientists exploit paralysis for false hopes."

Don Reed, with his son Roman, first met Keirstead at the Reeve-Irvine Center in 2002. Reed held in his hands a squirming, and formerly paralyzed, rat, while his son looked on in wonder. "Hans knelt down beside us, and said, 'This would not have happened without you,' " Reed says, the memory still fresh. "That was a beautiful, beautiful moment." Reed is under no illusions this will help his son. Keirstead made clear the therapy doesn't work on old injuries such as Roman's—though he is now researching chronic injury treatment. Still, in Reed's view, stem cells offer a new era of hope. "To me, it's like the *Wizard of Oz*, where it changes from black and white to colour," Reed says. "There's that one section where [Dorothy] opens the door into a new world. That's right where I feel we are. It's magic."

The object of all this attention grows in petri dishes and flasks in a tiny, locked cell culture room in Keirstead's laboratory. The stem cells are derived from frozen fertilized embryos that otherwise would have been discarded from fertility clinics. They're not much to look at: little white blobs representing colonies by the millions, feeding on specially concocted liquid "growth factors" that resemble garishly coloured sports drinks. Unlike stem cells harvested from adults, a palatable alternative to critics, these multiply quickly, and with great purity, and they are far more versatile, capable of morphing



'IF YOU WANT TO CALL STEM CELLS DIVINE, GO FOR IT'



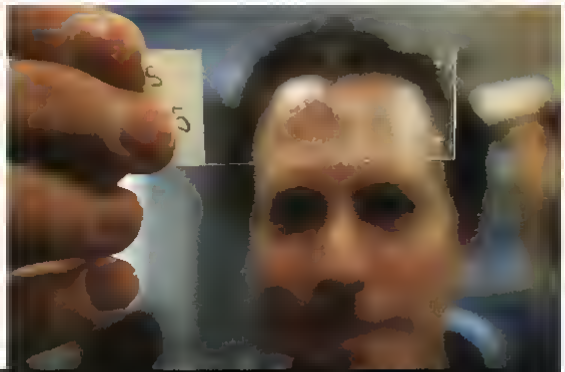
'HANS HAS GOT to get busy,' says Suzanne Short (below). Keirstad in his lab (above).

into any kind of body cell, says Keirstead

The stem cells' therapeutic potential rests in that malleability They are nothing and they are everything. In those first few days after fertilization, they're all-purpose instruments, awaiting instructions to become one of the 200 or so specialized cells that grow toenails, livers, hearts and the other component parts of the human body. "If you wish to say that is more than a biological, a scientific wonder, if you wish to say that is divine, then go for it," says Keirstead. "I think that you wouldn't be far off the mark and you might even be right. But doesn't that just say we shouldn't be wasting them and throwing them away?"

Still, they're also the earliest stage of life, though they lack form or nerves or human qualities, and are incapable of creating a baby unless implanted in a woman's womb. Harvesting their potential requires breaking open small balls of about 150 cells known as blastocysts, and for some it is flat out wrong to tamper with any embryo. "Like a snowflake," President Bush has said, upping the moral ante, "each of these embryos is unique, with the unique genetic potential of an individual human being."

Standing in the cell room, Keirstead offers a different take on this moral equivalence of life argument. If there was a fire in here, and a lab technician was unconscious on the floor from smoke inhalation, what is the priority? Do you first



HE'S BEEN ACCUSED OF PEDDLING FALSE HOPE AND LIES

rescue the man, or the flask of stem cells, he asks. "No compassionate human on this earth would value more a three day-old round ball of 150 cells that would fit in the eyeball of Lincoln on the dime," he says, answering his own question. "You don't value that as much as a grown adult who has culture and heart and history and love."

Critics have accused Keirstead of rushing ahead too fast, and of cozying up to biotech companies, but Keirstead is unapologetically entrepreneurial. If the purpose of the exercise is fixing spines, that means getting research out of the lab and into the market. With the cost of many human clinical trials for new therapies running about $500 million, that's not for the faint of heart. "Sorry if this sounds egotistical," he says, "but most scientists aren't as business savvy as I am."

Within a year of arriving here, he'd partnered with Tom Lane, a UCI colleague and immunologist studying multiple sclerosis, a disease that also results in insulating myelin being stripped away from the central nervous system. They created an antibody that, in animals, stops the extensive inflammation and secondary damage caused after a new spinal injury. It also halts, with a simple injection, the continued attack of MS in animals and appears to have potential to treat Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. They formed a private company, Ability Biomedical, to raise funds to move development along. Two years ago, they sold the rights to the therapy to biopharmaceutical giant Medarex for more than US$8 million. The drug is now in human trials, thanks to Medarex's deep pockets and expertise—a development that so excited Keirstead, he couldn't sleep for days.

He was also moving on other fronts. He signed a deal in 2001 with Geron Corp., a California-based biotech firm and stem cell pioneer. In essence, he traded his future intellectual property rights for millions in research funding and access to stem cells. His lab—with its 22 employees and "totally spaceship" array of equipment and facilities—was the first in North America to use stem cells for spinal cord research. Within a year, he'd developed a way to grow them into high-purity populations of human adult oligodendrocytes, the myelin makers of the central nervous system. It is these that restored movement to acutely injured rats and convinced Geron to move the therapy to human trials next spring.

Couldn't have happened—at least not this quickly—without crawling into bed with industry, he says. Couldn't have happened in Canada, either, he says, where the tone of the debate is lower, but the money is scarce, and funding approvals grind slowly through an oversight committee of the federal Canadian Institutes of Health Research. "I miss Canada. I love Canada. I go back to Canada all the time," he says. "But I could never run a laboratory where I support 22 people. I could never have the equipment I have. I could never have the industry relations I have."

Speed is a relative thing. Among those stoking Keirstead's impatience is an artist named Suzanne Short, 44, who lives just down the coast at Laguna Beach. Today, in her studio with its magnificent view of the Pacific, she's painting a giant blue eye. She uses pens and brushes held in her mouth, after the use of her hands, arms and legs was stolen from her 24 years ago by a drunk driver. She's been watching the slow state of spinal cord research for more than half her life.

She first met Keirstead five years ago. She likes how he's taken the potential of stem cell therapy and run with it. "I think it's great that Hans isn't doing research for the sake of research," she says. "He starts something and he wants to get it out there and into clinical trials to be used in humans." She especially likes that he's researching chronic injuries. Maybe it's too much to hope she'll walk again. But imagine what it would be like to awake in the morning and, without assistance, have the mobility to *get into* her wheelchair. "Hans," she says, "has got to get busy."

He smiles when told this a day later over lunch. He's attempting a couple of approaches, one trying to dissolve the old scars surrounding chronic injuries, the other to build a new connection that circumvents the scars altogether. "With both of those approaches, I'm having what I would call early shows of success," he says. "So, I'm trying. Cross your fingers."

That's the thing with stem cells. There's so much potential, he's pushing the research boundaries on many fronts, he concedes. A seasoned professor here—a surfer—told him, "Hans, you're moving further and further to the front of the wave." Not a good place to be, he advised. Hang back and let some hotshot just ahead show you how the wave is breaking so you can ride it better. Keirstead laughs. "I should listen to that advice," he says. Then he shrugs, not at all convinced. M

TAHOE



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'I DON'T SEE THE KIDS AS HAVING THIS OR NOT HAVING THAT. IT'S ALL ABOUT FACILITATING POTENTIAL.'—TOM CHAU, WHOSE REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS IMPROVE LIFE FOR DISABLED CHILDREN

GABE COSCARELLA

DIRTY JOB, BUT THIS GUY DOESN'T HAVE TO DO IT

When he was still a plumber, **Gabe Coscarella** spent most of his days in other people's basements, sloshing through brown, stinky waste. He would always repair the problem—clear a drain or install a new pipe—but the flood water would usually return. Convinced there was a permanent solution (read: he was tired of tiptoeing through human excrement), the 41-year-old Edmontonian designed a drainage valve that acts like a trap door, stopping sewage backflow before it reaches the basement. His award-winning invention—the Mainline Fullport Backwater Valve—is now the industry standard, installed in more than 50,000 new homes every year. "I don't do any plumbing anymore," he laughs. "The first thing I did was get rid of my tools. I mean, I'll still do the odd thing for an uncle here or there, but that's it."

MAYDIANNE ANDRADE

AT LEAST THEY DIE HAPPY

Maydianne Andrade is Canada's very own spider woman. The Toronto-based zoologist, who focuses mainly on sex and cannibalism within the world of Australian redback spiders, has garnered international attention for offering new insights into sexual selection among these members of the black widow family. For pushing the limits in her unique discipline, she was named to *Popular Science*'s "Brilliant 10" list last fall. The 35-year-old's most recent discovery: male spiders in this group mature faster if they can smell females—if there are fewer potential mates nearby, they have less of a reason to grow up since their life revolves around sex. Andrade has also done major research on the fact that male redback spiders will sacrifice their lives for sex: "They actually dangle their bodies above the female's fangs while they're mating."

CARL GRILLMAIR

FINDING A WINDOW INTO THE PAST

Earlier this year, astronomer **Carl Grillmair** found a massive group of never-before-seen stars that date back to the beginning of the universe. The former Calgarian, who now works at the Spitzer Science Center in Pasadena, Calif., says that the ancient lights—in the form of a large stream, streaking across almost a third of the northern sky—are fossil remnants of a star cluster that was ripped apart by the Milky Way. "It's pretty cool to find something that nobody else has ever seen," says Grillmair, 47, who plans to spend the next couple of years researching his rare finding. What he knows now is that the length of the stream extends from the Big Dipper through the constellation of Cancer and is about 30,000 light years from earth. And the stars have very small random motions and are moving rapidly in one direction—about 100 million miles an hour. Says Grillmair: "It's like bumper to bumper traffic up there."

ALAIN BRUNET

TAKING THE EDGE OFF POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS

During a terrifying event, such as rape, war, or car accident, intense emotions are seared into the brain's amygdala, and can lead to post traumatic stress disorder. Psythotherapy is the only treatment for PTSD, but often fails. Psychologist **Alain Brunet** at Montreal's McGill University, however, says each time a PTSD patient recalls their pain, the brain re-saves those emotions all over again. Disrupt the process, and you could take the edge off those emotions. In a study of 19 PTSD sufferers, Brunet, 42, did just that with a single low dose of propranolol, a common heart drug. Patients showed a 19 per cent reduction in symptoms, proof that, in principle, propranolol can treat PTSD. Says Brunet: "If we could remove the emotional pain around the memory, or dampen it, then you'd still have the memory, but it would be like a regular unpleasant memory—like the time you got a parking ticket."

JOANNA BERZOWSKA

CLOTHES THAT CHANGE SPOTS AND RATE GROPES

This summer, **Joanna Berzowska** is going to create "kinetic" dresses, complete with hemlines that rise and fall on their own and fabrics that can electronically tighten, like a corset, and loosen. The Concordia University professor—who started her math degree at McGill when she was 16 and combined it with a fine arts degree at Concordia a year later—calls herself a "geeky nerd," but the age-old dream of inventing magical fabrics are coming true in her Montreal lab where she integrates electronics into textiles. Berzowska, 33, weaves conductive threads into cloth that change colour when touched or heated, and made an animal-print dress that loses its spots when another body presses against it. Beaded onto a "grope" skirt, another of her inventions, are electronic components and light-emitting diodes that measure the intensity of a fondle, the harder the grope, the longer it takes for the illumination to fade. While the commercial possibilities of her work seem infinite, the technological challenges are daunting. "If it was easy," says Berzowska, "it would be at the Gap already."

RON DEIBERT

PROFESSOR HACKER VS. OPPRESSIVE REGIMES

Ron Deibert's students affectionately call him the "hacker prof." Officially, he's the director of the Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto, where his hacktivism is as infectious as a computer virus, but in a good way. Deibert's lab co-founded the OpenNet Initiative, whose dogged cyber detective work has exposed how Western software manufacturers help oppressive regimes censor Internet content. OpenNet has shown, for instance, how Cisco, Fortinet, Secure Computing and Websense have sold China, Burma, Iran and Yemen, respectively, the electronic firewalls being used to limit web access. In January, the MacArthur Foundation awarded OpenNet US$3 million, allowing a four-fold expansion of its investigations. "This is the most rewarding research I've ever done," says Deibert, 41. "It's not abstract and theoretical, but connected, substantially, to people in countries where the rights we enjoy here in Canada have to be fought for."

ALISA SMITH AND JAMES MacKINNON

'LOCAVORES' EAT A LOT OF POTATOES

When **Alisa Smith** and **James MacKinnon** realized the fossil fuels they saved by cycling to the grocery store were nothing compared to those spent transporting their food from around the globe, they decided to eat locally for a year—only what was grown and processed within a 100-mile radius of their Vancouver home. "We controversially went non-metric—160 km didn't sound very catchy," laughs Smith, 34. They got chummy with local farmers, preserved jams with honey instead of sugar, and lost a combined 15 lb. on a diet of lots of potatoes. Life improved considerably when they discovered a local flour mill—adding bread and pasta to their menu. Their diet, which ended in March, has inspired several "locavore" communities in the U.S. and Canada.

TOM CHAU

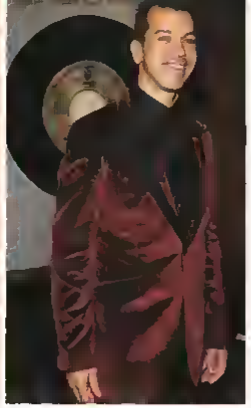
KIDS, NOT COMPUTERS, ARE THE FUTURE

When **Tom Chau** called Toronto's Bloorview MacMillan Children's Centre seven years ago and told them he wanted to quit his cushy job at IBM to do research for disabled children, they warned him against making a rash decision—mainly because they didn't have any money to pay him. But Chau quit his job anyway. "There was just this emptiness at the end of the day," he says. Chau, 36, found his own funding and has since developed, among other things, a revolutionary prosthetic arm triggered by the faint sounds of a child's arm muscles and a system that allows kids with motor disabilities to play music. Chau is currently researching ways to help speech-impaired children better communicate. "I don't see the kids as having this or not having that," he says. "It's all about facilitating potential."



LEFT TO RIGHT: NO CREDIT; NO CREDIT; DEAN FRIGNELL; IAN BARRETT; NO CREDIT; NO CREDIT; PAUL JOSEPH; MIKE CASSESE









JERSEY BOYS: A couple of old Torontonians, McAnuff (left) and Trujillo, provide the genius behind the Tony Awards' Best Musical

MAKE 'EM LAUGH: Pill (with rifle) did it with dark humour, while the *Drowsy Chaperone* cast went a more traditional Broadway route

BROADWAY BOB AND CO.

Bob Martin and his Drowsy Chaperone lead a cast of Canadians on an all-out invasion of New York's theatre world. BY JOHN INTINI

For Bob Martin, the toughest thing about performing *The Drowsy Chaperone* on Broadway this spring was mastering the curtain call. "I have always been very casual about my bow—I have a comic performer's loose-bodied, loose-limbed bow," says the Toronto-born actor. "But you can't do that down here. There is a definite Broadway bow. I had to learn to stride forward to the lip of the stage, throw my arms in the air and take a big glorious bow. It was the most uncomfortable thing and something that I worked on all through previews so I'd be ready for opening night."

The Second City alum has proven more than ready for his close-up. As Man in Chair, the show's star, he helped *Drowsy* earn 13 Tony nominations (including two for himself: best lead actor in a musical and best book of a musical). And he's at the centre of the recent Canadian invasion of the New York City theatre scene. Many of the Broadway blockbusters this season have included a Canadian in a critical role. *Jersey Boys*, which captured the Tony for Best Musical, is directed by the legendary Toronto-bred auteur, Des McAnuff, and choreographed by Sergio Trujillo, who was raised in Toronto. Edmonton's Aszure Barton shaped the movements of the much-buzzed-about *Threepenny Opera*. And 20-year old Alison Pill from Toronto earned a best actress Tony nomination for playing a would-be revolutionary in *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*.

Pill only took on the role in April just a week before the dark comedy made the big move to the Broadway stage. She spent that time in near total silence. "We scream for the entire show and my voice just disappeared during that last week off-Broadway—I was terrified," says Pill, who with the help of herbal tea and lozenges found her voice just in time for the opening at Lyceum Theatre. "Now, I go through about two boxes of Throat Coat—which is a really good herbal tea—every week. And in my dressing room I have a vocal steamer—a device with a mask that you put on and inhale steam to moisten your throat. I look like a big nerd but, hey, it works."

A seasoned film and TV actor, Pill didn't fall in love with the stage until she moved from Toronto to New York City's East Village two years ago. "I never did any theatre in Canada," says Pill, who now splits her time between screen and stage projects. "But I've discovered that there is so much you can only do on stage that you can't in film—there's something so of the moment about it. I've been saying the same words for a few weeks, but it's constantly changing."

Pill, who was shocked by the Tony nomination and describes the night of the awards as "New York glamorous," admits to missing a good portion of the show. "They got my category out of the way near the beginning and since I'd never been to Radio City Music Hall I wandered around a bit," she says. "They have these amazing art deco bathrooms with long rows of velvet-covered chairs and mirrors."

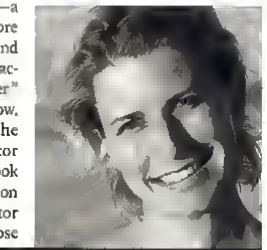
Of course, everything is more grand on Broadway—including the pain inflicted by a harsh review. "It's like the Olympics of theatre," says Trujillo, a veteran dancer who made his Broadway debut as a choreographer with *Jersey Boys*. "The critics are tougher and the audiences are more sophisticated." This fall, Trujillo and McAnuff (who many expect to be named this week as an artistic director for Stratford's 2007 season) plan to create some more Broadway magic together when they mount *Wiz*—promising a "whole new take" on the *Wizard of Oz*.

Meanwhile, Barton, who formally trained at Canada's National Ballet, is another Canadian choreographer putting her own unique mark on the Big Apple. She was hand-picked to be an artist-in-residence at the prestigious Baryshnikov Arts Center, which opened last November, and is currently touring with a dance group that is performing two of her pieces. (She will also perform a duet this summer with Mikhail Baryshnikov.) This follows her strong Broadway debut with *The Threepenny Opera*, starring Alan Cumming and Cyndi Lauper. "It was so appetizing for me because it has so many different levels," says Barton, 30. "It's dark, sexual, real and emotional—it just has a lot of depth. I want people to have an experience when they come to the theatre—and not just be entertained."

For that, many will check out some huge Canadian-born Hollywood talent gracing a couple of small off-Broadway haunts this summer. Toronto-born Eric McCormack is playing it straight in Neil LaBute's *Some Girl(s)* after wrapping up *Will & Grace*. And Ottawa-born Sandra Oh is lending some sizable star power to the cast of Diana Son's *Satellites*, while *Grey's Anatomy* is on hiatus.

Of course, *Drowsy*'s hilarious romp through a lost 1920s musical—described by one notoriously tough Broadway critic as "the most original musical of the season"—is still one of the hottest tickets in town. That's a long way from its very humble beginnings—a sketch first performed by friends at a pre-wedding bash for Martin and Janet Van De Graaff (whose names are still used for the two main characters) before making a fuller debut at Toronto's Fringe Festival in 1999. "The budget at the Fringe was $200," says Martin. "The Broadway budget is almost $10 million."

While Martin may enjoy a more comfortable armchair in New York, his costume has changed very little—Man in Chair wears a wool shirt, a wool vest and an oversized wool cardigan. "All of the costumes in the show are amazing and cost thousands of dollars, and then there's mine, which is essentially from Goodwill," says Martin. "I even wear my own shoes—a pair of Merrells I wore in rehearsal one day and realized were just so accurate to the character."



Martin should know. He's been playing the show's geeky narrator since he wrote the book the musical is based on with Canadian director Don McKellar (the close friends shared the Tony for best book—one of five that *Drowsy* won last month). "This has been the most demanding form," says Martin, "mainly because I've had to sing and dance on Broadway—luckily I only have one song and usually hit most of my notes."

Martin is the only performing member from the original Fringe Festival show (Lisa Lambert and Greg Morrison—major players in that first incarnation—did, however, win a Tony for best original score). "It was only logical that I still be doing this seeing as I wrote the part for myself," says Martin. "Since it's a big musical now, everyone at home understands. I just hope people looking at it from the outside don't think of me as this ambitious guy who took a wedding gift and said this is going to take me to Broadway. Obviously, I had no idea this would happen."

Now that he's arrived, Martin admits to being surprised by how accepting the New York theatre community has been. "I expected Broadway to be competitive, with the jealousies you would find in any kind of business involving ambition and a small number of jobs," says Martin, who is currently renting an apartment in Hell's Kitchen. "I certainly haven't had a sense of anyone wondering what all of us Canadians are doing here. In fact, I feel like an American actor—I just happen to come from the funny state."

Before the curtain went up on opening night—and with his 78-year-old mother Pamela in the audience, on her first ever trip to New York—Martin remembers escaping to his backstage dressing room. Hoping a little fan mail would ease his pre-show jitters, he grabbed the card on top of the pile. Turns out, it was a handwritten note from the Prime Minister. "Stephen Harper wrote that I was truly a Canadian success story and told me to break a leg," laughs Martin. "Let me just say it didn't exactly calm my nerves—I was like, oh, okay, this is a big deal." And certainly worthy of a big Broadway bow. M

'I FEEL LIKE AN AMERICAN ACTOR—I JUST HAPPEN TO COME FROM THE FUNNY STATE'



ERIC McCORMACK and Sandra Oh take it off-Broadway



HOT TYPE: McKellar and Martin, Barton

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: AP; BETTY CP; JOAN MARCUS
NO CREDIT: AP; EVERETT COLLECTION; CP

HONOUR ROLL
★ Arts & Entertainment ★

'I WAS SEEING ALL THESE COOL BARBIE COMMERCIALS AND I STARTED THINKING "HEY MAYBE THAT WOULD BE FUN IF I COULD GET ON TV" '—TAP DANCING CHAMP-TURNED-ACTRESS TAYA CALICETTO

TERRY McBRIDE
THE DOWNLOADER'S BEST FRIEND

Terry McBride, the CEO of Vancouver-based Nettwerk Music Group, is a rare breed of record label executive. He not only supports music downloading, but has forked over $40,000 for fans to fight lawsuits filed against them by the Recording Industry Association of America. "Litigating a customer is one of the stupidest things," says McBride, 46, whose acts include **Barenaked Ladies** and **Avril Lavigne**. And McBride doesn't even believe that file sharing is to blame for declining revenues, arguing that "prices have come down. You have shrinking retail space. And the replacement cycle's over." His solution: get creative. Bring advertisers online, and offer mixes of songs to download like Nettwerk has done with the new Ladies single. Most of all, says McBride, the industry has to let fans enjoy the music. "There's a new generation that doesn't need to own music, they only need to have access to music. If you continue to tell them how they're going to have access to it, they're going to continue to tell you to f--k off." Here's hoping someone starts listening.

DARIA WERBOWY
FACE THAT LAUNCHED A THOUSAND PRODUCTS

It's impossible to walk through a department store cosmetics section these days without being distracted by **Daria Werbowy's** eyes. That's because the Mississauga, Ont.–bred modelling sensation stares out from several billboards. The 22-year old, who has already earned herself first-name-only status, boasts a client list that includes Prada, Ralph Lauren, Versace, Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Christian Dior and Chanel. Werbowy also holds the record for more runway shows in a single season than any model in history. And she has proven to be immune to the many pitfalls of an industry that burns through "it" girls. Some credit the former sailing camp counselor's success to her down-to-earth demeanour and infectious charm—of course those surreal feline features of hers don't hurt either.

SUSANNE BOYCE
JUST CRAZY ENOUGH TO PIMP YOUR TV

For most TV buffs, "aspirational" wouldn't be the first word to describe MTV's *Pimp My Ride*, featuring C-list rapper-cum-car-enthusiast Xzibit and dilapidated jalopies. But that's how **Susanne Boyce**, CTV's president of programming, sees it. "People thought we were crazy," she laughs. "I love that show. He's such an interesting character." Audiences agree with Boyce about what makes for great TV. Since she took the helm in 2001, CTV has become the most watched network in Canada, boasting the highest ratings for drama (*CSI*), comedy (*Corner Gas*), and entertainment magazine (*eTalk*). For Boyce, the highlights have been airing—for some 20 hours straight—the Canadian Live 8 concert, and the Giller Prize show. "It confirmed that people love smart, funny and to feel things. It's television as a shared experience," she says. So is there a show Boyce has yet to nab? "I bet there is," she says. "I just haven't seen it yet. I'm looking forward to the great surprise." So are viewers.

KEVIN ZEGERS
HIS BIG-SCREEN TRANSFORMATION

It's the kind of bold role that a young **Leo DiCaprio** or **Johnny Depp** would have taken. And one that today usually goes to the likes of **Ryan Gosling** or **Kieran Culkin**. But it was Woodstock, Ont., native **Kevin Zegers** who landed the part of the teen hustler in *Transamerica*—2005's critically acclaimed film about a pre-op transsexual (**Felicity Huffman**) who takes a road trip with his/her estranged son. The movie came just in time, as Zegers—best known for *Air Bud*, about a basketball-playing dog—was seriously considering "calling it a day" on his 13-year career. "I wasn't really a kid anymore," says Zegers, 21, "and I wasn't an adult." But Hollywood won't let him escape. This year at Cannes, he received the Chopard Prize for up-and-coming male performer, and he has two movies coming out this fall. "It's not as exciting as it used to be," he says about acting. "But I think that's a good thing. I'm not goofing around like I used to. I want to build a proper career, like actors used to do in the '60s and '70s."

FROM LEFT CP; NO CREDIT; COOPERSHOOTS; CP

LEONARD COHEN
THE RETURN OF THE MONK/PUNK POET

After seeing his retirement nest egg wiped out—and waging a nasty legal battle with his former managers—**Leonard Cohen** is back on Boogie Street. *The Book of Longing*, his new collection of poetry and drawings, is a bestseller. A candid memoir of love, sadness, rage and wry resignation, this is open-heart poetry—a punk portrait of the artist as a failed monk. Cohen, 71, also ushered his companion and former backup singer, **Anjani Thomas**, into the spotlight with the CD *Blue Alert*, which he produced. Between his words and her voice—the sound of "perfume burning in the air," to quote the title song—it's like hearing Cohen reincarnated as a woman. Now he's working on his own CD. He may tour next year. And the world's coolest septugenarian sings with **Bono** in a new documentary, *I'm Your Man*.

TAYA CALICETTO
TEN HOURS OF DANCE PRACTICE—AND BARBIE

When **Taya Calicetto** was two, she would stand outside her older sister's dance class and mimic the movements. A year later, she was competing locally. Now, age 8, she's schooled in ballet, lyrical, hip-hop, jazz, acrobatic, and is the Canadian junior tap dance champion. Last week she was the youngest participant in the jazz and tap categories at the Dance World Cup in Portugal. On top of the 10 hours of dance practice a week, the Grade 2 student from Mission, B.C., plays baseball, watches *Arthur*, has a backyard trampoline, and is a working actor. "I was seeing all these cool Barbie commercials," says Calicetto, "and I started thinking, 'Hey maybe that would be fun if I could get on TV, too.' " She plays an orphan in the upcoming **John Cusack** movie, *Martian Child*—but he's not her favourite co-star. "I did a Swan Lake Barbie commercial," she says, "and I got to dance around with the life-sized Barbie. And after they gave me the Barbie for doing such a good job." Despite her busy life, she's even found a little time to play with it.

MICHAEL LEVINE
BRINGING OUT THE BOARDROOM IN WAGNER

With filmmakers like **Atom Egoyan** and **François Girard** directing, the Canadian Opera Company's recent productions of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* took on cinematic dimensions. But the visual genius behind the *Cycle* is designer **Michael Levine**, whose sets reimagine Wagner's world with thrilling modernity. For Egoyan's apocalyptic *Die Walküre*, he created an industrial Valhalla of girders and catwalks, with white-shrouded corpses being raised and lowered on cables. *In* Girard's *Siegfried*, the hero's brain merges with the forest to become a Freudian thicket of memories and dreams—a cerebral vortex that resembles an exploding tree. And in **Tim Albery**'s *Götterdämmerung*, the palace becomes a fascistic boardroom of glowing red computer screens. Levine's staging runs like a live fuse through the *Ring Cycle*. In September, at Toronto's new opera house, he brings it all to a thunderous climax by taking on the direction of *Das Rheingold*—the final production but the first instalment in the cycle, which will be remounted in its entirety. Conductor **Richard Bradshaw** is the star. But backstage, Levine is Lord of the Ring.

LISA MOORE
GREEN IS FOR ALLIGATOR—AND GILLER

Lisa Moore seemed a natural short story writer in 2002 when her dazzling collection *Open* brought her a Giller Prize nomination. Last year, though, the Newfoundland native poured her delight in shifting viewpoints and her remarkable gift for capturing transient moments into her debut novel. And *Alligator* did *Open* one better, garnering a Giller nomination in November while going on to win the Commonwealth Prize for Canada in January. "I loved having the novel's space," says Moore, 42, "interweaving characters so things could happen at once. That's the way St. John's works—it's full of overlapping lives." But what she'd really like to do is "write something no one could identify, an unnameable genre between short story and novel." Moore, who writes with grace and an unblinking eye even when blogging about falling in love with her green Giller dress, could do it if anyone could.



BILL KOSTROUN/AP

REBUILDING A WINNER

Craig MacTavish helped the ultimate hockey city recapture its glory days. Turns out he was returning a favour. BY KEN MACQUEEN

It was June 21, for heaven's sake, the first day of summer, and the longest of many long days. In Edmonton, where the summer sun hangs in the sky forever, thoughts should have turned from hockey to long, sweet evenings of golf. And yet, in Rexall Place, the Oilers pasted on smiles and posed for their annual team picture on a fresh sheet of ice. They made a last visit to the dressing room to empty their lockers and say their goodbyes and try to come to terms with falling one game short of the Stanley Cup. It was that last game in Raleigh that weighed heavy on 47-year old coach Craig MacTavish. On this warm and sunny afternoon, he seemed trapped in a long dark night of the solstice.

"I don't know if you become more disappointed with the passage of time but I think that is the case for me," he said amid the chaos of a locker room filled with media, players, their children, and even a few of their parents. "I was able to rationalize it a little better after the game than I can now. You grow increasingly disappointed to a point," he said with a sigh. "I don't know where that point ends." It was a rare show of vulnerability by a coach not given to public displays of personal feelings.

It has not helped, of course, that Edmonton—his home—is the ultimate hockey city, and that it is hurting after coming so close to reliving those glory years of the 1980s. MacTavish started sprouting roots here almost upon his arrival in the fall of 1985, as a wounded 27-year-old checking forward in need of a new direction and a second chance. Edmonton provided that, not to mention friendship, respect and his wife Debbie. MacTavish returned the favour in abundance, as a player in three Stanley Cup wins here, as a gritty team captain, and, since his return from New York in 1999, first as an assistant, and a year later as head coach.

Last week, even after taking his team on a two-month playoff tear that transfixed a nation, that was clearly not enough. He'd frequently reminded his players through this playoff run to have fun and enjoy the moment, for it is a rare and wonderful experience. But now he was incapable of taking his own advice. "Not to take anything away from Carolina," he said of the cup-winning Hurricanes, "we thought we were the best team in the finals. But, we obviously didn't prove that."

The next day, thousands of Edmontonians turned out for an Oilers rally at City Hall. It was a classy, upbeat salute, attended by members of the team's ownership group, by general manager Kevin Lowe, and by several Oilers stars, including captain Ryan Smyth, assistant captain Ethan Moreau and hometown hero Fernando Pisani. Notable by his absence was MacTavish. It was left to Lowe, his friend and boss, to explain the "mixed feelings" that caused many of the team to miss the event, as much as they appreciated the sentiment behind it. "We're not an organization that celebrates failure," said Lowe, a key part of all five Oiler cup wins. "Even though the seventh game of the Stanley Cup finals is good, in our minds it's failure."

MacTavish's hard-headed, uncompromising standard says much about the way he has always approached the game. He was, after all, the last NHLer playing without a helmet when he retired in 1997. It also says much about the man he became in Edmonton. He was born in London, Ont., earned a hockey scholarship to the University of Massachusetts-Lowell, and signed with the nearby Boston Bruins in 1979. It all fell into place. "I wasn't taking life seriously," he later said, "and a lot of things seemed like a joke to me." That changed, brutally, on Jan. 25, 1984, when MacTavish, then 25, left a bar under the influence of alcohol, triggering a crash that killed 26 year-old Kim Radley of Maine. He pleaded guilty to vehicular homicide and was sentenced to a year in jail. It was there he began rebuilding his life.

Although not required as part of his sentence, MacTavish went to schools, told his story and warned students of the perils of drinking and driving. And he initiated a wrenching three-hour meeting with Radley's parents in the correctional centre courtyard. He expressed his sorrow and his shame, and he received from the woman's deeply Christian family a remarkable degree of forgiveness. "What good are we going to do if we crucify Craig," asked the father, Ronald Foote, in a 1985 interview with the *New York Daily News*. He called MacTavish an excellent young man, but like too many such men in sports, the big money and the big cars come too easily and too fast. "You can't build a skyscraper," Foote said, "if it ain't got a foundation underneath it."

MacTavish, in that story, called his meeting with the family a turning point. "It alleviated some of my guilt, obviously," he said. "I can't say enough about them. They were unbelievable." After his release, he sought a fresh start in a new place to build his foundation. It was Glen Sather, then the Oilers coach, who came calling. "I'm not a do-gooder," he said when he announced the signing. "He made a mistake and he has paid for his error, but I want him because he's a whale of a player." Sather was right. He was tough on opponents, fearless when blocking shots, and he had a thinking man's grasp of the game. Sather, who left a stellar career managing the Oilers to become general manager of the Rangers, would eventually draw MacTavish to New York, first as a player and later as an assistant coach.

Ottawa Senators general manager John Muckler was an assistant coach in Edmonton when MacTavish arrived. He recalls a third and fourth-line player who carved out a niche as a faceoff man, a penalty killer and a valuable offensive asset. By 1990, when Muckler coached the Oilers to their only cup without Wayne Gretzky in the lineup, MacTavish had grown into a respected team leader. By then Muckler saw MacTavish as a coach in training. "I think that's why he played as long as he did because he was a student of the game," says Muckler. "He didn't sit on the bench to rest. He sat there and analyzed. I think that's why he's such a great coach now."

MacTavish bunked with Lowe, then a star defenceman with the Oilers, during his first few weeks in Edmonton. The two became fast friends. He was thrown into the Gretzky-era Oilers, one of the best teams ever assembled in hockey. "It was a good character team," MacTavish told *Maclean's* of those heady early years. "You really had a front row seat to a real collection of winners: coaches, managers and players. It really affirmed to me how things operated on a championship calibre team."

He also bonded with the city, so much so that he kept a home in Edmonton even after he was traded to New York, and then three other teams, before he retired. "My [three] kids have been brought up here, largely, and they've enjoyed it. We've got a lot of friends here. It's been very good to me and my family."

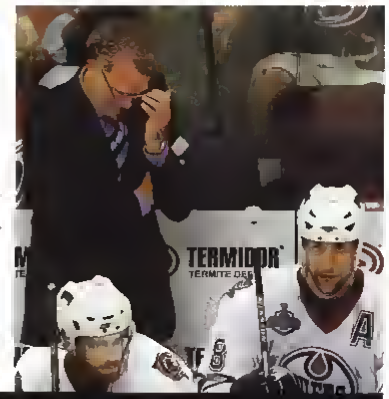
This season—the first under a salary cap that gave small markets a more equal footing against big money teams—was the first real opportunity for Lowe and MacTavish to prove their pell-mell Oiler-style of hockey can again bring success in a transformed league. It also showed MacTavish's ability as a tactician, when he went against type and turned the Oilers into a defensive shell to defeat heavily favoured Detroit in the first round.

MacTavish's style earned him a huge measure of support from his players. Chris Pronger, the brilliant towering defenceman who was on the ice more than half of every playoff game, was briefly a teammate of MacTavish's during his final playing days in St. Louis. "You know what, he coaches similar to the way he played," says Pronger. "He was a heart and soul kind of guy when I played with him, and that's certainly the way he coaches."

The respect is clearly mutual. MacTavish said he'd love to build next season's team from this year's roster. Still, Edmonton has a long list of unrestricted free agents, including their injured star goaltender Dwayne Roloson, Michael Peca, fan-favourite Pisani and Sergei Samsonov. Keeping the team intact, and under the $44-million salary cap, will be a challenge for Lowe. MacTavish didn't make it any easier by announcing there are some fat raises due his players. "They set themselves in a different category from the way they performed and the way they delivered," he said. "My sense as a coach, a little bit different than a manager, is that they're entitled to be paid commensurate to their accomplishments, which are significant."

It was in the raw, painful moments after their game seven loss that MacTavish spoke of those accomplishments to a dispirited team. He reminded them of the stacked odds they faced during a tough year, and of the playoff battles they won. He told them of how deep they reached and how much they learned about themselves in the process. "It was everything positive," said Jarrett Stoll, a 24-year-old centre. "He couldn't say enough about how proud he was of us."

Maybe someday, before the Edmonton days shorten into fall, the disappointment will lift and the coach will allow himself a full share of pride, for a towering accomplishment, built on a good foundation. M



PAUL CHIASSON/CP

FOR MACTAVISH, the pain of losing to Carolina in game seven overshadows the fact he took the team on a two-month playoff tear

MACTAVISH IS 'A HEART AND SOUL KIND OF GUY'

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(OPPOSITE PAGE) S. GABOURY/DMI/REX FEATURES

film

THIS DEVIL ISN'T ANNA



MERYL STREEP in *The Devil Wears Prada*

Wintour would never have worn those earrings or those clunky shoes. And Streep would never be able to handle Wintour's job at Vogue. But that's not the point of this movie. It's about making ordinary people feel good.

BY BARBARA AMIEL

On Friday, *The Devil Wears Prada* opens in cinemas across Canada. The film is based on the book of the same name, a *roman à clef* written by Lauren Weisberger, the young woman who worked briefly as an assistant to *Vogue* editor-in-chief Anna Wintour. The film depicts Miranda Priestly, the acid-tongued editor of a fashion magazine, widely believed to be a thinly veiled portrait of Wintour, and tells the story of the evil regime she inflicts on her assistant.

Meryl Streep plays Miranda with Anne Hathaway as her assistant, Andrea. The movie character Nigel, who is based on Anna's invaluable fashion guru, André Leon Talley, has for obscure reasons morphed from a six-foot seven Afro-American to a five-foot eight Caucasian—not in my view a change for the better, though the part is wonderfully acted by Stanley Tucci. If for no other reason—and certainly not to learn anything at all about Anna Wintour—the film has to be seen for the exquisite performance of Meryl Streep, whose Miranda is destined for comic immortality. Whether or not the film will have any box office staying power or quickly go into DVD, as Anna Wintour is reputed to have said after spunkily attending a screening of it (wearing a cream and black tea-length Prada dress of "old" vintage, which in Anna-speak could mean a season or two off the current one), remains to be seen. The under-25 set will adore it, as will that rather large class of women who guiltily read *Hello!* magazine at the hairdresser's.

Anna Wintour has become more than a fashion-world icon for knowledgeable consumers and wistful salesgirls. Candice Bergen has played her in *Sex and the City*. Wintour's name is gradually dropping into popular culture the way only film and rock stars have done previously.

Anna happens to be a friend of mine, a fact which is of absolutely no help in coping with the cold panic that grips me whenever we meet. This panic bears no precise relationship to her behaviour as I know it. Anna takes or returns my telephone calls promptly. She is unfailingly warm, animated and interested in my well-being when we lunch. She will readily give any telephone number requested, from the best cosmetician to tattoo permanent eyebrows on my bare forehead to the most effective doctor for tennis elbow. It is not her fault that the perfection of her bobbed and exquisitely lightened hair (Stephen Knoll salon, NYC), the alpha appropriateness of her clothes (Prada, Chanel, Proenza Schouler), and her dislike of the lengthy convoluted sentence all come together to make one feel inadequate.

Just why one breaks into a cold sweat—and I am not alone in this reaction among her friends and acquaintances—is something of a mystery. Probably it has some kinship to the star-struck syndrome. Possibly, too, it has something to do with the enigma of Anna. What the hell is she thinking behind that silent gaze or those opaque sunglasses?

As arguably the most successful magazine editor currently working, with a run at American *Vogue* of 18 years and no end in sight, two well-balanced and loving children, and only one divorce in an America where over 40 per cent of marriages break down, it's a stretch to see Anna's life as a cautionary morality tale—which is how *The Devil Wears Prada* paints its editrix. The film's ending sticks to the predictable template for teen flicks: ambitious young beautiful girl does awful things in order to remedy her inferior social status and get great clothes. Ambitious young beautiful girl is then humiliated and sees the light.

"You sold your soul the day you put on those first Jimmy Choos," says Miranda to Andrea. Given the price of Jimmy Choos—approx $500 a pair—and the weight of Hathaway's soul, the price seems exorbitant. Happily, in both book and film the end is satisfyingly conventional. Andrea realizes that her own life—beer-swilling with bar-hopping dolts and her cute boyfriend Nate (played by HBO's *Entourage* star Adrian Grenier), who teaches, what else, disadvantaged children in the South Bronx while looking as if he never left Beverly Hills 90210—is more authentic and valuable than Miranda's empty universe of flashbulbs and celebrities. Miranda, after all—and this is key—is lonely. She is a woman with no friends, a husband who has left her, and only the cold comfort of her children, a posh suite at a Paris hotel, an Upper East Side Manhattan townhouse, a powerful job she adores, and a salary of a million bucks.

Audiences will be reassured to know that their ordinary lives are far more worthwhile than the unhappy existence of Miranda. Since time immemorial, people of limited or average ability and energy have consoled themselves that they understand the more important values in life, such as relationships and intimacy, as though these things were not available to energetic, talented people. This is a literary convention that fuels many a work on stage, screen and between covers. It always finds a ready audience.

"I turned my back on everything I believed in," wails Andrea to Nate, "and for what? Shoes and belts and jackets and skirts." People like to sit back and relax while being reassured that though they don't amount to a hill of beans, what matters is that their friends love them. Flattering your audience is what any knowledgeable author and certainly

film

all Hollywood directors do. And one of the most common conventions by which this is done is the depiction of powerful and talented beings as human failures.

Whether or not author Lauren Weisberger believes this rot, she has successfully turned a few months internship to good account and got herself a seven-figure book deal, topping up her US$200,000 film advance. The movie, like the book, is a bit of a one-trick pony in which an insanely sadistic editor asks more and more impossible tasks of her put upon assistant. But half-truths wrapped around lies can make the incredulous sound credible—to the gullible. The notion that Anna Wintour would demand her assistant get the unpublished manuscript of the next Harry Potter book for her children within hours, at penalty of being fired, is ludicrous. The notion that Anna would want something done "now" and not "shortly" is accurate. Anna wants what she wants right away.

If you are famous or notorious, you simply have to put up with being portrayed or caricatured, sometimes by very silly people, sometimes by vicious ones. It comes with the territory. Anna being very famous gets Streep, an A-list actress. Me, being barely notorious, gets Lara Flynn Boyle, doing a TV movie of my life. But then again, as Anna pointed out when we were discussing what to wear to the premieres of the films about ourselves, Boyle is nearly 30 years younger than I am and Streep is nearly five months older than she is. You can't have everything.

There have been quite a few shots at pinning down the essential Anna Wintour. *Front Row* by Jerry Oppenheimer is the unauthorized biography. A BBC documentary, *Boss Woman*, followed her about for weeks. Most surface details of the book, documentary and film are consistent. The woman rises at the ungodly hour of 5:45 a.m., plays an hour of tennis, thus toning her upper arms sufficiently to allow the wearing of Lagerfeld's sleeveless dresses till death, has hair and makeup before going to the office at 8 a.m. My experience of lunch with her (1.5 hours at Michael's on West 55th) confirms she does indeed consume a steak and frites.

Unlike many irritating business people of lesser stature, Anna does not take or make telephone calls during meals or ever talk about how busy she is. She never boasts about the accomplishments of her children. At dinner she eats very little and leaves virtually every function early to get home. She is stick thin but manages—or so my husband tells me—to be persuasively sexual without obvious flash when she dances, which she does with a vengeance and irritatingly well.





STREEP in the movie (top); Wintour at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York

(BOTTOM) CP

THE MYSTERY OF ANNA—ONE THAT BAFFLED ME FOR YEARS—IS THAT SHE CARRIES NO HANDBAG. HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?

Having little knowledge of her private life, I couldn't tell you who her close girlfriends are, but the name Anne McNally, fashionista from *Vanity Fair*, sometimes crops up. Her daughter Bee is a smasher, writing a column for a British newspaper. Anna is English in aspects of her style, which means she honours the British obsession with privacy and shows no emotion in public, a manner that translates as aloof, constipated and cold in feely Americanese. Her conversation follows the British "come off it" approach to earnestness, and she has a low tolerance level for small talk.

The singular quality she has is one of loyalty. "Once a friend, that's it," says Andre Leon Talley. Fighting a weight problem that had seriously threatened his life, Talley had been the subject of Anna's pleading interventions for years. We all went to meetings summoned by her, had worried conferences over coffee and tea. Anna arranged private dietitians, and stays at spas. Eventually, she triumphed. "I was living in denial and it took her loyalty and caring to get me out of it," said Talley, who ended up at the Duke Diet & Fitness Center in North Carolina and 70 lb. lighter.

Meryl Streep's Miranda has little connection with this Wintour, either in style or substance. Wintour's ears would never display the oversized gold hoop earrings Streep wears in the film. The clunky shoe that stretches out of the limousine in a lingering shot when Miranda first appears would never appear on the foot of Wintour. She wears only Manolo Blahnik, whose shop windows have not been darkened by the platform sole. Wintour wore cardigans when the rest of us were in jackets. She wore smart blue jeans and high heels to Park Avenue dinners a decade ago. The frumpy dark suits of the film's editrix are a far cry from the graphic white Chanel suit Anna wore this past spring with a black silk stocking and white criss-cross sandals. Anna is above all "modern" in her dressing.

Streep wields chunky handbags throughout the film that she throws like hand grenades on her assistant's desk. The mystery of Anna—one that baffled me for years—is that she carries no handbag. How can any woman do this? Turns out she leaves it in her car and an assistant picks it up and takes it to the office. Why she has this routine I don't know. Certainly it unnerves females. Possibly a bag spoils the line of her clothes for photographs. Obviously it is part of the persona. Speaking from experience, handbags are a wretched nuisance, digging into shoulders, accumulating debris, susceptible to theft. But as Margaret Thatcher, Golda Meir and the Queen have all demonstrated, the most disciplined woman finds life difficult without wielding the protective armour of the handbag.

Ultimately, the woman Streep portrays is inadequate for Anna's job at *Vogue*. One cannot imagine Streep's Miranda joyfully cultivating Hillary Clinton or Laura Bush, happily chatting with Reese Witherspoon or surviving the repetitive suppers with the Fifth Avenue matrons that Wintour tolerates. Streep cannot extinguish something in her own being. She brings an intellectual impatience to her character and an attitude that is simply not part of Anna's makeup. Nor is there any sign in Streep's performance of the unerring genius of Wintour's eye for innovative design and her eerie ability to spot the "next thing" in magazine culture. Anna gets *Vogue* the advertisers and circulation that dwarfs all other magazines. The September 2005 issue came in at a stupendous 690 pages of advertising with a magazine well over 900 pages. Streep's editrix couldn't come close.

Anna is not quite the cool navigator of life she is made out to be. If she were, she might have rounded her talents more. As a public speaker, for example, she exhibits an astonishing shyness. Her remarks are always read rather than improvised spontaneously. I introduced her in 2002 at one of those interminable New York City celebration-of-women-lunches called the Matrix Awards, in the Waldorf Astoria hotel. Anna received an award for her talent in magazine publishing. My paean celebrated her "refusal to whine, to temporize and/or to complain when the envious try to debunk her editorial achievement by consigning her to the pigeonhole of fashion." On this last compliment I was slightly premature. In her written remarks which followed my intro, Anna's speech took on the whole journalism community for failing to recognize the "profound" aspect of *Vogue*'s editorial content simply because they put it down as a women's magazine. "What on earth are you doing introducing Anna Wintour?" asked a *New York Times* opinion columnist afterwards.

Like the Hollywood movie stars that now adorn the cover of *Vogue*, if she has a political point of view, Anna is a liberal. She endorsed Al Gore in his presidential bid. Which proves, as if it ever needed to be proved, that liberals can demonstrate guts and fight. She survives the tabloid spotlight with fortitude. She routinely gets dead animals, flour or pies thrown in her face by extremists of the animal rights movement. Her Manhattan downtown home is defaced by their graffiti. Still, she will not back down. Furs keep her in ads and furs are what she has always loved since she knocked about London in the 1960s, modelling a maxi-length white fox coat over her miniskirts. The Fendi fur coats and scarves remain on her back or draped becomingly about her neck.

Fashion is an art form, albeit a minor one, and Anna began to construct her persona and style from a very early age. When a Mozart or Mendelssohn performs at age nine, they are acclaimed. When a woman like Anna begins to construct her persona as an art form at a similarly early age, she is considered affected. Anna left her school, North London Collegiate, under a cloud, having worn her tunic too short. (Having attended the same school, I have a natural sympathy for this. The hideous brown colour of our school uniforms put both of us off that shade forever.) Hairdressers and skin maintenance were part of her regime before her twenties.

The ability to decorate the body in never-ending ways takes imagination, and to do it well takes not only imagination but a sense of artistry and symmetry. For the consumer, though, it can easily be addictive and its ability to ruin women has been a staple of literature. Flaubert's Madame Bovary, with her love of new dresses, sends her husband into a spiral of debt that ultimately causes her suicide. Edith Wharton's Lily Bart ends up overdosing on chloral due to a similar passion for frippery. The theme surfaced often in Émile Zola's Rougon-Macquart novels.

"The temptation was acute; mad desires were driving all the women crazy," Zola writes in his inspired description of opening day of the renovated department store called The Ladies' Paradise in his novel of the same name. "... everywhere on all the counters, there was a snowy whiteness, Spanish blonde lace as light as air, Brussels appliqué with large flowers on fine mesh, needle point and Venetian lace with heavier designs, Alencon and Bruges lace of regal and almost religious richness. It seemed as if the God of Fashion had set up his white tabernacle there."

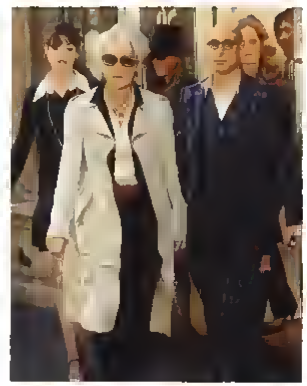
The air is ever thin in such an environment, and the lack of oxygen seems to send its inhabitants into a mind-altering state. "Put your pencil skirts into the back of the closet," one stylist advised me this month. "They are done, done, done. You must have something with a gentle balloon look." This is what happens when you take your subject seriously, and of course it deserves, in one sense, to be taken seriously. It is a multi-billion-dollar business whose acceptance, or your lack of it, will pretty much denote your social positioning. But too often its practitioners build a mythical world in which fashion statements acquire a moral weight. Pencil skirts become the lepers of your wardrobe. They must be removed from closets on pain of social exile.

The July *Vogue* makes it all sound perfectly natural. "Fall's new silhouettes. The Bustle, the Bell, the Big shoulder" proclaims the cover. Inside the magazine asks, "Will you wear fall's bold new shapes? From bell coats to balloon pants ... proportion is paramount." The genius of *Vogue*'s vision is apparent on page 99. One look at the photos and my pencil skirts were en route to the backroom.

Anna herself has never exhibited any of this insanity. I've never heard her make a single comment on fashion apart from perfectly normal statements about the strength of this or that designer's season. She occasionally slips into an economic haze due to a certain insulation from reality. I encountered her once under the canopy of a Fifth Avenue hotel in Manhattan. She looked a knockout, wearing a fantastic Yves Saint Laurent snakeskin trench coat. "You must have it," she said. "Go and get it. There's a size 36 left." I wanted to ask what it cost but hadn't the guts. That afternoon, I forked out some US$12,000 and took it home for an hour, only to return it the same day. When she asked me, I mumbled something about having exhausted my budget for the season. "But it's only three thousand dollars," she said.

Meryl Streep's Miranda would have to pay retail. M

ANNA, BEING VERY FAMOUS, GETS STREEP, AN A-LIST ACTRESS. ME, BEING BARELY NOTORIOUS, GETS LARA FLYNN BOYLE.





(BOTTOM) GEORGE DESOTA/LIAISON/GETTY IMAGES

WINTOUR WITH André Leon Talley (below) and the film version of Talley (top)

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film

RETRO HERO: As Jack Sparrow, Depp says his strategy was 'to appeal to little kids as well as the most hardened adult intellectuals'

Hijacking Hollywood's high seas

In a superhero summer, Johnny Depp steers his own course as a mere rock 'n' roll mortal

BY BRIAN D. JOHNSON

What you have to love about Hollywood blockbusters is how, with no higher purpose than to make a ton of money, they light up the zeitgeist in Vegas neon. The battle for the summer box office is shaping up to be a showdown between two iconic styles of heroism. In one corner, played by what's his name, is the Man of Stainless Steel, fighting for truth, justice and the American way, along with the right to banish his body hair, and walk among us wearing tights, red booties and a cape. In the other corner, played by Johnny Depp, is Captain Jack Sparrow, a shambolic buccaneer with beaded dreadlocks, kohl eyeliner and a slurred speech pattern stolen from Rolling Stone Keith Richards.

It's the superhero versus the anti-hero—the godlike cop trying to save the world versus the grimy outlaw trying to save himself. As they wrestle for attention in the two biggest movies of the summer, there's more at stake than the box office, even if the media dote on weekend grosses like playoff sports scores. At a time when America tests the limits of frontier justice in Iraq, these two escapist adventures offer rival models of heroism—righteous self-sacrifice versus rebel insolence.

Both pictures are sequels, derived from cartoon worlds. *Superman Returns* revives a venerable franchise based on a comic book, *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*, the second instalment of a franchise-in-the-making, was inspired by a Disney theme park ride. And, by cosmic coincidence, both their heroes grapple with underworld forces that loom from the ocean depths. In Superman's case, a malignant continent grows from crystals planted beneath the sea by Lex Luthor, as for Captain Jack, he finds himself in the slimy grip of Davy Jones, an octopus-bearded ghost with a claim on his soul.

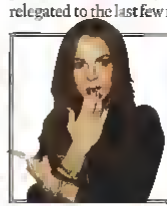
In movies on this scale, the challenge for flesh-and-blood actors is to avoid being upstaged by the films' more highly paid talent, the special effects. The newly forged Man of Steel is Brandon Routh, an unknown 26-year-old from Iowa. It's obvious that this tall, dark-haired hunk was cast for his physical resemblance, not just to Superman, but to the late Christopher Reeve, who played the role in four movies. Routh even has the same quizzical smile as Reeve. As an actor, it's tough enough to submerge your identity in a comic book character, never mind be cast as a clone of the actor who once played him.

The solution, it seems, was to have Routh talk as little as possible, and simply strike a series of iconic poses. Which he does very well. He's the first Superman who actually looks like he could be made out of extraterrestrial material. The guy looks positively Kryptonian. There may be an inner Tom Cruise just waiting to bust out of Brandon Routh, but you'd never know it. And off-screen, he seems to have accepted a sheepish Clark Kent obscurity. Appearing on *Letterman* last week, the star of the summer's most expensive blockbuster (US$200 million) was relegated to the last few minutes of the show.

Johnny Depp is another story. Rather than conforming to a studio template, he created his character in spite of it. When he was cast in the first movie, *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Black Pearl*, Depp alarmed Disney executives by covering his teeth with gold caps and using an ex-junkie rock star as his inspiration. The studio wanted to lose the gold caps, the braids in his beard and the trinkets dangling from his dreadlocks. But Depp stood his ground. Essentially, he took a pirate's approach to playing a pirate: he hijacked the character. An actor who's spent most of his career dodging superstardom ended up stumbling into it by defying Hollywood's conventional wisdom. Creating a complex character, he succeeded in his stated goal to "make Captain Jack appeal to little kids as well as the most hardened adult intellectuals."

Jack is a trickster, a weathered sage who, like Keith, is smarter than he lets on. Behind the stumbling facade lurks a quicksilver cunning. Meanwhile, in a case of life lurching to catch up to art, Richards the pirate rocker has finally agreed to play a cameo as Jack Sparrow's father in the next *Pirates* sequel, due out in 2007. And with an unintended flourish of method acting—falling from a coconut tree in Fiji and suffering a concussion that required brain surgery—Keith proved that he was, if anything, overqualified for the role. But then he already wears a silver skull ring on his finger.

Richards' appeal has always been his falli-



WE'RE STALKING... LINDSAY LOHAN

What is it about her trips to the ladies room that causes such fuss? Recently, Lohan went to use the facilities during a party in New York's Butter club. When she returned she found Sean "Diddy" Combs' group had taken her table. She argued, but got thrown out. At another do, *Vogue* editor Anna Wintour noted Lohan went to the loo six times, prompting Prada Devil to swear, "If she gets up one more time she will never get invited to my events again."

bility. While Mick plays the Stones' superhero, Keith drags the band back to a human scale. He embodies a proudly dissolute, leathery integrity. And by channelling that, Depp has created a retro hero who stands quite apart from the current Hollywood fashion.

Everywhere else this summer, the screen is dominated by superheroes, and heroines, with dual identities. In the off-the-rack formula of *The Devil Wears Prada*, Anne Hathaway undergoes a *Pygmalion* makeover to become a superwoman assistant to the liber-editor of a fashion magazine. And in the upcoming *My Super Ex-Girlfriend*, Uma Thurman plays a brunette with glasses who morphs into a blond Woman of Steel who can fly through walls and blow her boyfriend across the room. Even Adam Sandler is relying on supernatural aids. In *Click*, he gets a universal remote that lets him mute his dog, fast forward marital quarrels and rewind his life.

With its *Pirates* franchise, Disney is patting itself on the back for honouring its *Treasure Island* roots and reviving a genre that's been virtually extinct for 50 years. Which seems disingenuous. These aren't just pirate movies. They're crammed with zombies and monsters. *Dead Man's Chest* refits the Black Pearl and launches another ghost ship called the Flying Dutchman. Digital villains multi-



RICHARDS will play Depp's dad in *Pirates 3*

ply like alien spawn. And the movie carries a new moral compass. It pits the ragged individualism of Jack Sparrow against the corporate pirates and bureaucratic buccaneers of the East India Trading Company.

But Disney could give them lessons in imperialism. The massive crew of *Dead Man's Chest* invaded the lush Caribbean island of Dominica, then improved on its unspoiled beauty by importing some 7,000 tropical plants. For Depp, keeping it real amid such industrial-scale contrivance must be as big a challenge as it is for Richards to remain authentically raw aboard the slick juggernaut of a Stones tour. In an age of superheroes, being a pirate is no mean feat. M

COMMENT

Angelina: Adopting? Pick me!



SCOTT FESCHUK

An open letter to Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie

First of all, congratulations on the birth of your daughter, Shiloh. I've seen the photos. Isn't human physiology a miraculous thing? I mean, the two of you engage in sexual intercourse and nine months later the publisher of *People* magazine has an orgasm.

It has come to my attention—through reports in the press and the telltale sound of millions of orphans simultaneously raising their arms and shouting, "Oooo, pick me!"—that you are thinking of adopting another child. I commend you both on your noble impulse. And I humbly prescribe a provocative course of action as you plan a larger family.

You should adopt *me*.

There's no denying I would be an unconventional choice. For one thing, I am a full-grown adult—which puts me at something of a disadvantage. For instance, I couldn't find a wicker hamper big enough to leave myself on your doorstep.

But believe me, I'll fit right in, and not just because I too hate Jon Voight. Your new baby probably spends all day sleeping, eating and relieving herself—that pretty much makes us twins, especially when golf is on TV. You both work tirelessly to ease suffering among the world's least fortunate, I had an Amnesty International sticker on my math binder in high school. You already have three young children and I totally love kids. In fact, I have a couple of my own! Adopt me, Mr. Pitt, and you're pretty much a lock to be crowned Sexiest Man Alive 2006 in *Grandparents Quarterly*.

In an interview on CNN, you indicated that you place a priority on achieving further diversity in your family. Advantage, Feschuk. You are two of the most attractive people on the face of the earth, whereas I am neither beautiful nor thin. Talk about balancing the ticket!

And that's not all. Your oldest child, Maddox, is Cambodian. Zahara is Ethiopian. Shiloh was born in Namibia. What a happy coincidence that I too hail from an exotic and mystical land. Perhaps you have heard of Canada? No? Well, it's very much like the post-apocalyptic world depicted in *Mad Max* but with more Yeti and taxes. Also, we've got this crazy health care system where you don't even have to pay when you get sick or "accidentally" run over a paparazzo if you catch my drift. What I'm saying is that I know a guy.

In many ways, Brad, I already think of you as a father. I find myself reflecting on the quality time we've spent together, alone, just the two of us, such as when I went to see *Meet Joe Black*. As for you, Angelina, you're never far from my thoughts. In fact, I'm thinking about you right now. I'm thinking about you in that scene from *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*, the one near the beginning when you're in that slinky white top and... oh my... the cleavage and the... uhh...

[Three minutes and a satisfying sigh later...]

Mom and Dad—I'm not taking anything for granted but I've already picked out some cool Star Wars wallpaper for my room and text messaged Jennifer Aniston to call her a bitch. I also checked with my "real" father and he's cool with this, so long as you answer one question that's of the utmost importance to him: what is Susan Sarandon's phone number? He's getting nowhere just standing outside her house.

I know that some may view this adoption pitch as a cynical gambit—a shameless ploy to be welcomed into a wealthy and also rich family in a caring and, my lawyers tell me, legally binding in perpetuity way. But I'm just an ordinary human being with ordinary human needs. I crave the simple things in life: a chuck on the shoulder from my new Dad to signify his approval, a kiss from my new Mom to signify her love (maybe, if I'm lucky, her tongue love) and a lucrative three-picture screenwriting deal with Universal.

Let me make a heartfelt pledge to each of you.

Dad, I'll never embarrass you in public. In fact, I'll hardly ever leave the house at all, what with my busy schedule of trying to accidentally walk in on Mom when she's coming out of the shower.

And Mom, I promise to be a good big brother. I'll be there for my little sister. And when she reaches high school I'll be there for her hot and sexually curious friends, too.

Also, what time do you typically shower? What's that? Oh, no reason.

Sincerely,

Junior

PS If this arrives too late and you've already adopted, please forward this to Ashton and Demi.

PPS But if Federline calls, you've never heard of me. M

Scott Feschuk can be reached at sfeschuk@sympatico.ca

CORBIS

Branching Out

When Canadians were recently asked how their *Visa*® cards helped them achieve a goal or meet one of life's challenges, the response was tremendous. Over 600 people shared their stories about wedding planning, vacations, home renovations and more. Five finalists were selected from the submissions. Here is one of their stories.



The message "Success is my goal" flashes on the screen of Rob Kok's cell phone when he turns it on each morning to start his day as owner of Ottawa Tree Surgeons (www.ottawatree.com). When he and his wife Nathalie purchased the phone in 2000 for his then fledgling urban tree care business, the message was a little reminder to keep going no matter how hard things got.

The business began slowly in 1999 when they were both employed full-time. On weekends, Nathalie and Rob would leave their baby, Krystofer, with grandparents while they strapped on in-line skates and bladed through neighbourhoods handing out flyers. For every 200 they stuffed in mailboxes, they'd get about five calls. After putting in a full day's work, Rob would do evening estimates for those calls and line up work for the weekend – from pruning hedges to consulting on renovation plans to taking down decayed trees.

Now that he had clients, he needed equipment. After work and between estimates, Rob would scoot off to buy a chainsaw or hedge trimmer or whatever was needed for the upcoming jobs. "We didn't have much money back then so we put everything on our *Visa* card," says Nathalie. "That weekend, I'd do the work, pay the guy helping me, then pay off the *Visa* card," remembers Rob. Every other weekend he'd invest in something else, whether it was chainsaw pants, work boots or a trailer.

Gradually, Rob's client base expanded—and so did his workdays. "He was up at five a.m. every morning and didn't go to bed until 11 p.m.," Nathalie recalls. When he had more clients than hours in a weekend, Rob knew it was time to take the next step. He quit his job and decided to run his company full-time.

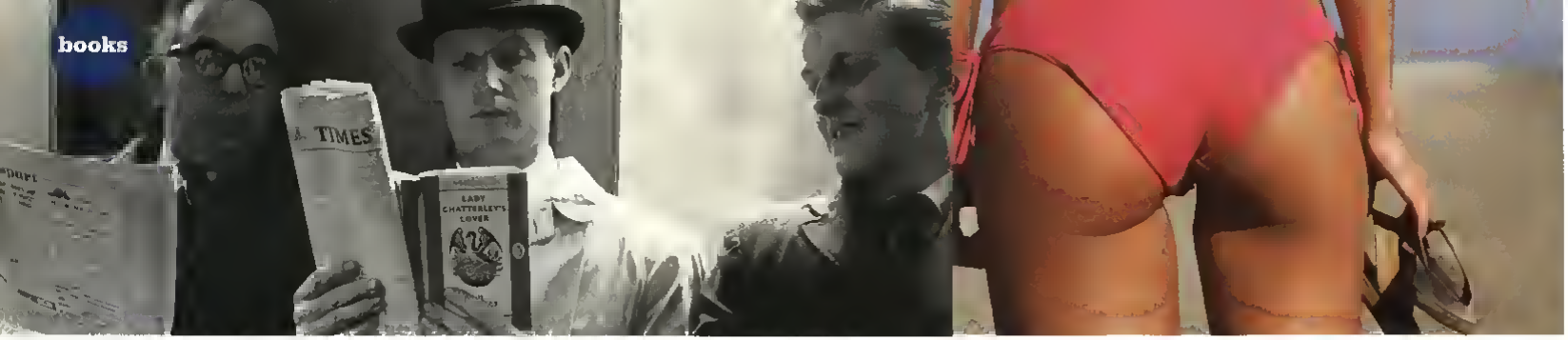
"Now that he had clients, he needed equipment. Rob would scoot off to buy a chainsaw or hedge trimmer or whatever was needed for the upcoming jobs."

By 2004, business was steady but Rob was doing everything on his own, from administration to payroll to supervising crews. Nathalie stepped in to manage the office while on maternity leave with their daughter, Julia. "I'd do my calls during Julia's morning nap, then play with her and do more calls when she slept in the afternoon," remembers Nathalie. It started as an experiment to see if the business could afford to have Nathalie on the payroll. They soon figured out she was handling roughly 60 calls a day—freeing Rob to do all the work she brought in. When her maternity leave was up, she resigned from her old job and went on the payroll full-time.

The Koks are thrilled. Rob no longer has to work every evening and weekend so they spend more time as a family. They just bought new patio furniture using their *Visa* card to create a backyard retreat and plan to pay it off before the bill comes in. "It's just so convenient that we often say to each other, 'Just put it on the *Visa*'—it's such a habit for us," says Nathalie. "Our *Visa* card will always be a part of our life."

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A LONDON commuter reads *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. 'The dark print is dated,' says one writer of the novel. See exhibit A, at right.

The trouble with insolent breasts

Every novelist understands that the sex in his book is his hostage to posterity

BY MARK STEYN

Geoff Dyer has written a book about D H Lawrence (*Out Of Sheer Rage*) and a book about photography (*The Ongoing Moment*), and in the latter he combines these two areas of interest in a disquisition on Georgia O'Keeffe's pubic area. This is apropos the famous photographs by her lover Alfred Stieglitz. Mr. Dyer is dissatisfied by the "mass of ink-dark shadow" with which the happy snapper renders her, ah, naughty bits (not the word the author uses), and compares the impenetrable jungle of Miss O'Keeffe's pubic hair with D H. Lawrence's passages on the same general turf, concluding that in both instances "the dark print is dated."

For a master of casual asides, he's making quite a profound observation here. Anyone who surveys pictures of naked women from a century ago and then takes a stroll along the beach at Saint-Tropez will appreciate that in this particular area fashions have changed dramatically. If you'd suggested to Stieglitz that he might want to get his gal a Brazilian wax before the next session, he wouldn't have seen the point: Brazil wise, the thickets of the rainforest were the big turn-on back then. So, given that Stieglitz's photographic representation has "dated," how likely is it that descriptive passages thereof can avoid the same fate?

Nothing in a novel dates as quickly as the sex scenes. In 1960, 200,000 copies of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* were sold in Britain on the first day the ban was lifted—in part because of the treasures therein implied by Mervyn Griffith-Jones, prosecuting counsel, in his famous question to the jury: "Is this a book you would wish your wife or servants to read?"

To which I say: yes. Make the missus and the footman and the scullery maid read it, but spare me, please. Sex in the movies has developed its own absurd conventions: watching, say, *Indecent Proposal*, with Woody Harrelson writhing around on Demi Moore's bulletproof chest to the accompaniment of some bombastic power ballad, one is aware subconsciously that this is as non-naturalistic as the "mad scene" from *Lucia di Lammermoor*. I'm told that when the Warsaw Pact went belly up and the poor deprived Commies suddenly got the latest Hollywood flicks, they took the athletic couplings for cinéma vérité—not only did the decadent West have bigger cars and houses but they got better sex, too—and made the mistake of trying it at home, greatly overburdening Soviet chiropractors and only adding to the strains on the fraying Russian health system. But novelistic sex isn't like movie sex: you can't take refuge in conventions, it reflects on you personally.

Take Alan Furst, author of atmosphere-laden spy thrillers in war-torn Europe. His deshabille moments were recently praised by two *New York Times* reviewers: one singled out "Mr. Furst's famously succinct eroticism," another called him "one of the few espionage writers who know how to write sex scenes." By contrast, B. R. Myers in *The Atlantic Monthly* says, "Furst's erotic passages are especially clumsy," and he cites the following: "hugging like long-lost lovers, riding each other's bottoms through the night."

Mr. Myers has a whole bunch of issues with Mr. Furst, including his "exasperating" punctuation. I'm with him on that one. His commas are infuriating: "I did have a few, suitors, for a time" (from *Dark Voyage*, 2004). In his new novel, *The Foreign Correspondent*, the eponymous journalist breaks up with his girlfriend: "I have met, somebody," he said. "It is, I think, serious." That comma between "met" and "somebody" irritated me far more than the sex. They're like rests in orchestral scores: you feel he's advertising his characters' thoughtfulness. Better that they ride each other's bottoms through the night than they ride each other's commas, which is how they pass much of the day.

But on balance it's Mr. Myers who needs to get off Mr. Furst's ass. For some years, Britain's *Literary Review* has given out an annual Bad Sex In Fiction award, for which the competition is pretty stiff. In 2003, Sting presented the honour to Aniruddha Bahal, who, having beaten Paul Theroux and John Updike, was happy to fly in from Delhi to pick up the prize. He won for this overextended metaphor in his novel *Bunker 13*:

"She is topping up your engine oil for the cross-country coming up. Your RPM is hitting a new high. To wait any longer would be to lose prime time."



FINALLY A BOOK ABOUT... SCIENCE AND CULTURE

The essays in *Human Nature: Fact and Fiction* (U of T Press) target the centuries-old gulf between the hard sciences and literary culture. Scientists like Harvard psychologist Steven Pinker discuss fiction ("a biologically frivolous activity," Pinker writes mischievously), while novelists like Ian McEwan and Philip Pullman argue that literature has always given voice to humanity's common nature, in a way that biology has only begun to do.

HULTON-DEUTSCH COLLECTION/CORBIS

"She picks up a Bugatti's momentum. You want her more at a Volkswagen's steady trot. Squeeze the maximum mileage out of your gallon of gas. But she's eating up the road with all cylinders blazing..."

That's certainly banal. But, on the other hand, one could imagine the lads down the pub talking about their birds in similar fashion. It may be that Mr. Bahal is brilliantly evoking the banal sexual imagination of his protagonist. A subsequent Bad Sex award-winner, Tom Wolfe for *I Am Charlotte Simmons*, is more problematic. He's a better writer, but precisely because of that he seems very self-conscious in his attempts to find *le mot juste*. He keeps going on about Charlotte's "mons pubis," which is one of those phrases that always reminds me of the queen of Australian comedy, Dame Edna Everage, introducing a show from her hilltop retreat, she declared, "Everyone is welcome to Mount Edna." But "mons pubis" is the least of it once Wolfe hits his stride and the fellows start exploring "first along the side, down to her iliac crest, and up to her armpit and then more toward her abdomen down to the gully that ran from her iliac crest to her crotch." And if you think you're lucky to grab a piece of iliac crest on a first date, wait till Wolfe gets to the "pelvic saddle" and "otorhinolaryngological caverns."

HE WOULDN'T HAVE SEEN THE POINT OF A BRAZILIAN WAX. BRAZIL-WISE, THE THICKETS OF THE RAINFOREST WERE THE BIG TURN-ON.

Lionel Bart, the composer of *Oliver!*, once told me about meeting Richard Rodgers to discuss a possible show together. In the wake of Oscar Hammerstein's death, Rodgers was looking for a new lyricist, but he had a few concerns about Bart's work. There's a song in the show *Maggie May* ostensibly improvised on the spot by a hooker to her dozing lover: "It works," said Rodgers, "but there are impure rhymes."

Bart replied: "That's because she's not a very good lyric writer."

That's a better defence for sex scenes. When most of us look back on memorable romantic encounters, we can perhaps single out a particular image or sensory recollection, but if we had to recount the whole thing from A to Z we wouldn't make a very good job of it. What I like about Alan Furst is the way he manages to find something particular to the occasion in a bathtub moment in *The Foreign Correspondent*, Christa "held her lower lip, delicately, between her teeth and lay back against the porcelain curve." Aside from the coitus getting interruptus by that brace of commas, I'd say that's a fine specific image: it sounds like a real detail a real person really noticed. Furst is an American writer who deals almost exclusively in Continental characters and, though B.R. Myers complains that sex-wise "the Europeans tend to come off as visitors from another planet," one of the novelist's neatest tricks is the way his sex bits sound like they've been translated from the original Czech or Croat. If Geoff Dyer is right about "datedness," to be able to do period foreign sex scenes is quite a trick.

Ian Fleming, one of Furst's predecessors in the espionage field, is an instructive guide here: in every other adventure or so, James Bond would run across a pair of "insolent breasts." What a masterful phrase, ingeniously covering whatever the reader's tastes might run to in this particular region. But flesh it out, so to speak, and I suspect almost every novelist understands the sex is his hostage to posterity. Whenever I'm in need of a laugh, I turn to one of my favourites—Judith Krantz's mega blockbuster *Princess Daisy*. It starts conventionally enough:

"Oh, yes! she thought, opening her lips to him, tumbled and craving and daring. She arched her body toward him, nudging his hands toward her breasts until they were clasped and claimed. He bent to the glorious task, dimly aware that never before had life flowed through him without the static and interferences of thought, never had he been so close to drinking the elemental wine of life. He tasted it on her lips and on her nipples and on her belly, his whole skin drank thirstily of her, and when he thrust into her, he knew he had arrived at last at the source, the spring..."

But, after all that arching and nudging and clasping and claiming and drinking and thrusting, Mrs. Krantz understands she needs to bring things down to earth:

"Afterward, as they lay together, half asleep, but unwilling to drift apart into unconsciousness, Daisy farted, in a tiny series of absolutely irrepressible little pops that seemed to her to go on for a minute."

Attagirl! When it comes to sex scenes, if you can't break new ground, at least break new wind. M

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BESTSELLERS

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Fiction

		LAST WEEK (WEEKS ON LIST)
1	SUITE FRANÇAISE by Irène Némirovsky	1 (11)
2	JPOD by Douglas Coupland	5 (6)
3	BOOK OF LONGING by Leonard Cohen	2 (8)
4	THE BIRTH HOUSE by Ami McKay	3 (15)
5	BLUE SHOES AND HAPPINESS by Alexander McCall Smith	4 (9)
6	TERRORIST by John Updike	8 (2)
7	THEFT by Peter Carey	10 (4)
8	PIECE OF MY HEART by Peter Robinson	6 (6)
8	EVERYMAN by Philip Roth	9 (2)
10	THE OTHER SIDE OF YOU by Salley Vickers	7 (3)

Non-fiction

1	MARLEY & ME by John Grogan	2 (20)
2.	DISPATCHES FROM THE EDGE by Anderson Cooper	1 (3)
3.	THE NASTY BITS by Anthony Bourdain	3 (7)
4	THE WEATHER MAKERS by Tim Flannery	6 (16)
5	FREAKONOMICS by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner	10 (53)
6	THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY by David Suzuki	7 (12)
7	ROUGH CROSSINGS by Simon Schama	(1)
8	CAESAR by Adrian Goldsworthy	(1)
9	THE ISLAND OF SEVEN CITIES by Paul Chiasson	9 (6)
10	MY LIFE IN FRANCE by Julia Child	5 (6)



WHEN RECORD COMPANIES rejected his CD, Victor released it on his own. He now has a hit single, *The Grace*, and another on the way

The Windsor basement tapes

16 famous rock stars sing on Daniel Victor's debut album, recorded in his parents' house

BY SHANDA DEZIEL • When Daniel Victor was six, his favourite place in the house was the basement—where his father had built a recording studio. He would crawl in between the legs of musicians who had come to have their albums produced there—picking up the basics of drums, guitar, piano and bass. "My toys were microphones, mixing boards and tape machines," he says. All through high school and university—in his home town of Windsor, Ont.—he'd retreat to the basement to record his own music. Even now, at 26, not much has changed—despite having a big-selling indie album, under the artist name Neverending White Lights. "I currently reside in the same house I grew up in," says Victor. "I need to be able to get up at four in the morning and go into the basement and record a track if I get inspired."

If you listen to rock radio you've heard Neverending White Lights' hit song, *The Grace*, from the debut CD *Act 1: Goodbye Friends of the Heavenly Bodies*. It's a long, pretty rock ballad, with sad and heavy lyrics about angels and death. The accompanying video evokes both the Romantic and Victorian periods—not exactly the standard fare. While Victor plays all the instruments on the track and wrote the lyrics, Dallas Green—a singer from the insanely popular Canadian rock band Alexisonfire—does the vocals. That's not to say it was Green's presence that helped bring this basement project to the mainstream airwaves. It was more difficult than that.

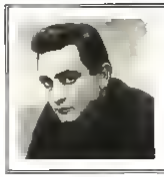
Over a five-year period, Victor wrote, recorded, produced, and obsessed over the album. He also hunted down 16 famous rock singers to take on vocal duties—a nearly impossible task considering he had few to-no connections. "It wasn't about me being charming or persuasive," says Victor. "They liked the music and saw something in it that would enhance what they were all about." Some of the bigger names include Green, Raine Maida of Our Lady Peace, and Scott Anderson of Finger Eleven—who, by putting their trust in Victor, have proven they have much more nuance and depth than they've shown in their own bands. Although the album is something of a star-studded masterpiece, record labels wouldn't sign on. The whole multiple-singer/compilation vibe confused music suits—they didn't know how to market it.

So Victor released it on his own. "When the record came out last September nobody was waiting for it," he says. "It wasn't supposed to have any singles. I figured I'd created something left-of-centre, a block of sombre ambient music, and that it would be one of those records that people want to own. But I didn't think it would become very popular, not Top 10 at rock radio."

How it broke through is a mystery. But *The Grace* is still going strong and the next single, *Angels & Saints*, should fare just as well—even though it doesn't have a big name attached to it. "The singer is Chris Gordon from Glasgow," says Victor. "He used to front a band called Deckard that's not really known around here. I just found the CD in a pawn shop—it looked interesting, and was three dollars." Victor would love to see Gordon become as popular in North America as the other collaborators on his album. And he's convinced music fans are yearning for something different than the "fabricated, standardized rock songs dominating radio. There's no love songs on my record. These songs are saying, 'Never mind the girl right now.' The first lyric of the whole album is, 'Would you settle for a wasted life?' "

Funny, coming from a guy who still hangs out in his parents' basement. Although, thanks to the CD's success, he's starting to visualize himself somewhere else. "I'm a go-at-my-own-pace individual and I find that there's just a lot of scheduling in North America. I think the European environment would be a little more easygoing." Victor (who goes by his first and middle names) would like to spend time in Italy, where his father, Jack Genaro, was born.

Genaro—who hosted a local '70s CBC show, *Music Makers*—executive produced his son's record. Victor says both his parents were a huge support during the years it took to make the album—although they were concerned when he lost 60 lb. and developed a nervous tremble from the stress. Then there's that whole not-moving-out thing. "Sure, I asked myself," says Victor, "will I be living with my parents the rest of my life and trying to make a successful record? It would have got to a point where I'm 48 and thinking, 'Maybe I should go sell real estate or something.' " Instead, he's almost ready to buy. M



JOHNNY CASH...HAS SOMETHING TO SAY

It should be a while before I see doctor death / So it would sure be nice if I could get my breath / Well I'm not the crying nor the whining kind / 'Til I hear the whistle of the 309 / Of the 309, of the 309 / Put me in my box on the 309 / Take me to the depot, put me to bed / Blow an electric fan on my gnarly old head / Everybody take a look see I'm doing fine / Then load my box on the 309—from *Like the 309*, Cash's last original song before he died

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF HARRIS/MACLEAN'S

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BRENT BARRETT plays the title role in *Phantom—The Las Vegas Spectacular*, which is 30 minutes shorter than the original musical

JOAN MARCUS

But they kept the chandelier

When Vegas gets a hit Broadway musical like The Phantom, it likes to make a few changes

BY JAIME J. WEINMAN • In Las Vegas, entertainment is all about bringing patrons the same things they can see elsewhere, only glitzier. So it's no surprise that one of London and Broadway's most popular musicals, *The Phantom of the Opera*, opened this week at the Venetian Hotel. What patrons might be surprised to find is that there are some differences between this *Phantom* and the version that played every other city. It's been retitled *Phantom—The Las Vegas Spectacular*. It plays 10 performances a week, with two separate casts to handle the workload. Most importantly, it's about 30 minutes shorter. But cutting chunks out of popular musicals isn't just a way of saving time—it's practically a Las Vegas tradition.

When a musical comes to Las Vegas, the producers soon learn the rule: a musical play must be no longer than any other evening's entertainment in Vegas, whether it's Cirque du Soleil, Celine Dion, or the occasional non-Canadian show. That means 90 minutes, no intermission, and cuts wherever the producers can manage to make them. Some producers do insist on bringing an uncut musical to town, and some have even achieved success that way. *Mamma Mia!*, a wholesome musical about illegitimacy, has been running in an uncut version since 2003, and before that, the hit revival of *Chicago* came to town without pruning. But usually, the length and presentation of a Vegas musical is less like a Broadway show and more like a floor show.

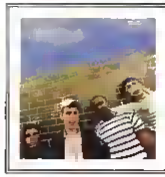
Phantom's cuts may be less noticeable than most shows', because the *Las Vegas Spectacular* got the original director, Harold Prince, who worked with the authors to make the editing unobtrusive. Prince told the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, "It's basically an opportunity to red-pencil some things that can stand being red-penciled." In practice, that means cutting moments of pointless comedy relief and shortening dance and dialogue scenes, but not cutting out any major numbers or sequences. With other shows, though, the red pencil can be a brutal weapon, when Prince brought his show *Fiddler on the Roof* to Vegas in the '60s, big cuts were made without consulting the authors.

Like almost everything else in Vegas, the 90-minute musical isn't new (not that Broadway is known for novelty either). Back in the city's golden age in the late '50s and early '60s, many hotels featured condensed versions of popular musicals, often with slightly over the hill stars. The Dunes Hotel had a big hit in 1962 with a shortened *Guys and Dolls* starring two ex-movie stars, Betty Grable and Dan Dailey; and when Susan Hayward's movie career faltered, she wound up doing 90 minutes' worth of the musical *Mame* in Vegas. In the '70s, the city started to move away from musicals, but now they're back.

Or are they? Few shows have really been able to make the transition from Broadway hit to Vegas favourite. *Phantom* arrives in town following some disappointing showings by recent Broadway transplants. *Hairspray*, the musical version of the John Waters film, seemed to have the perfect style for Vegas: it was campy, glossy and full of homages to the early '60s music that Vegas has never forgotten. But even in a 90-minute version, *Hairspray* didn't catch on, and it closed earlier this month. One of the producers told the *New York Times* that getting people to see a musical in Vegas "proved to be a little more challenging than we thought."

The biggest hit musical in Vegas is *Mamma Mia!*—and that show, with its catalogue of ABBA songs and almost non-existent story, is more like a Vegas floor show than a traditional musical. It appeals to the same segment of the audience that would come to see Barry Manilow or, for that matter, ABBA. *Phantom*'s composer, Andrew Lloyd Webber, optimistically told the *Los Angeles Times* that, "Even in Vegas, I think they do want a story." But what they really seem to want is good old Vegas-style nostalgia, whether it's nostalgia for old movie stars in the '60s, or old pop bands in the current decade.

Not that producers are going to give up and leave Vegas to ABBA. In addition to *Phantom*, this summer will bring a streamlined version of *The Producers*. In his interview with the *Review-Journal*, Prince was upbeat about *Phantom*'s chances, and about the biggest advantage of a Vegas production: better special effects. "This particular chandelier," he said, "will at least deliver in relation to the amount of talk I've heard about the chandelier before." That's the Las Vegas musical: less content, more chandeliers. M



PERFORMANCE OF THE WEEK **REFUGEE BOY BAND**

Four young men, each of whom arrived in Britain alone and at the hands of human smugglers, have been plucked from cattle-call auditions by impresario Richard Dadomanici to form Britain's first all-refugee boy band. "People thought the idea is shockingly poor taste," admits Dadomanici, but he adds: "There are no positive role models when it comes to asylum-seekers." The group has yet to get a name but have recorded a song, *A Guy Like Me*.



LOWBROW MOVIES such as *The 40-Year-Old Virgin* can be more progressive in their casting than most Oscar fare

Look, over there. It's a black guy!

TV discovers colour-blind casting. And it's beer ads and sex comedies that led the way.

BY KEVIN CHONG • Earlier this year, Axe Deodorant launched a clever advertising campaign in Canada called "Game Killers." In the ads, a game killer is anyone—be it a boorish friend or a caddish adversary—who gets between a man and the object of his affection. In one, a game killer called "British Accent Guy" woos a young woman in front of her fuming boyfriend. "While re-arranging this game killer's face is tempting," a voiceover suggests, "what could you do to those teeth that shoddy dentistry hasn't?" What's interesting about the ad isn't so much the punchline, or its suggestion to "Keep Your Cool" and not sweat these interlopers, but the casting: while British Accent Guy and the girl are white, the hero—the average guy whose game is being threatened—happens to be black.

Similarly, last year, in a Molson's commercial that advises a *realpolitik* approach to meeting women, a black man at a nightclub coaches a friend (not shown). "Remember, you're a quarterback! A quarterback!" And in an Old Navy ad that recently aired in the United States, a young white woman misinterprets a fashionable (but affordable) scarf from her Asian boyfriend as a wedding proposal. The relaxed commingling of ethnicities feels neither revolutionary nor gimmicky. It simply reflects the contemporary world, especially among younger people.

It was not so long ago that TV shows like *Seinfeld* and *Friends* were lambasted for their white bread visions of New York City, and that minorities popped up only in commercials or programs that explicitly pursued a multicultural aesthetic. These days colour-blind casting is catching on. But it seems to be happening most quickly not in art house movies, but in places many would deem unsophisticated: deodorant and beer ads, sex comedies like *The 40 Year Old Virgin*, and action films like *2 Fast 2 Furious*.

There's *Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle*, centred around two pot-smoking Asians and their quest to get to a fast food restaurant. Some of the film's jokes address the stoners' ethnicity, but the biggest laughs revolve around their marijuana-induced munchies. Or take last summer's *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*. One running gag involved the inability of a character, played by Paul Rudd, to get over an ex-girlfriend who had dumped him years earlier. In a small but noticeable bit of colour-blind casting, the ex-girlfriend was played by a South Asian actress, Mindy Kaling.

Compare these films to a list of 2006 Oscar nominees for Best Picture: *Brokeback Mountain*, *Capote*, *Goodnight, and Good Luck*, *Munich*, and *Crash*. Of these highbrow mainstream films, only the winner, *Crash*, which is explicitly about race relations, features any non-white actors in major roles. Lowbrow culture is apparently better able, or more willing, to reflect an ethnically mixed world.

The casting seems almost incidental. "With the exception of certain clients—government agencies that have mandates to represent a cross-section of the community," says Nancy Mauro, an advertising copywriter, "I've never had a client suggest specific ethnic casting." That said, savvy marketing is clearly part of the story. In 1997, for instance, long before *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, Volkswagen ran an ad in which two men—one black, one white—find an abandoned armchair that they load into their VW Golf. The ad inspired much talk about whether the two characters were a gay couple. "If research shows that a significant percentage of gay men purchase this vehicle, or have the potential to," says Mauro, "a smart marketer will cast the target as the hero of the spot." And when seeking a suitable love interest for Will Smith in the romantic comedy *Hitch*, producers reportedly chose Eva Mendes because they felt her Cuban-American heritage would appeal equally to black and white audiences.

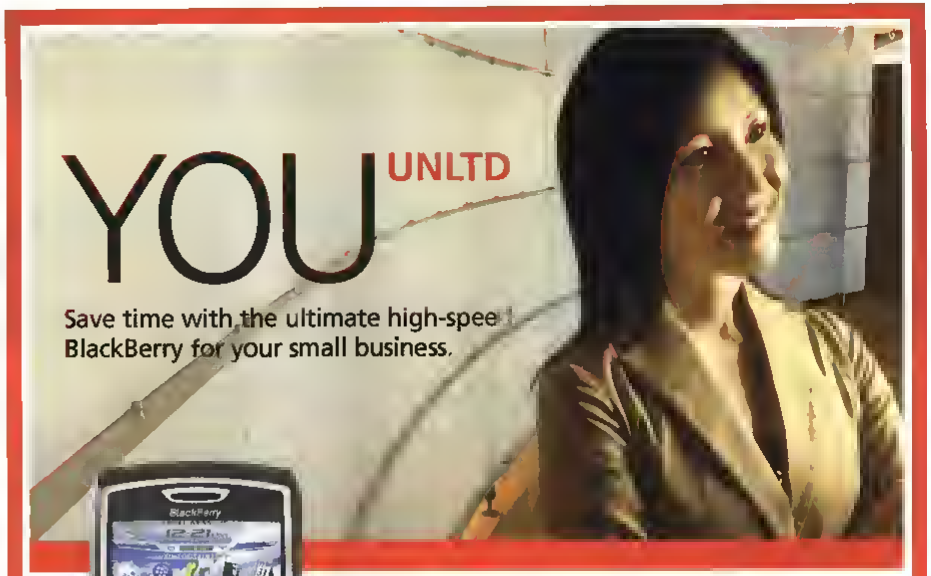
Within the films, too, race remains a factor. Harold and Kumar deal with racists who joke about the Karate Kid and Apu (the convenience-store clerk from *The Simpsons*). And in *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, the black and South Asian stereo salesmen trade barbs about drive-by shootings and turbans. There's a good dose of self-conscious cultural jokes—a nod, perhaps, that the portrayal wouldn't ring true otherwise. Still, this may be better than completely ignoring race. "The one danger in colour-blind casting is that it can make it seem as if all racial problems have already been solved," says Carmen Van Kerckhove, co-founder of the U.S. blog Mixed Media Watch. A truly colour-blind society wouldn't require rose-coloured glasses. M



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THE ITALIANS were first to use the fork. That only made the English and French, who considered Italians effeminate, more fork-averse.

The twisted secret life of forks

The unsettlingly hermaphroditic dinner utensil was trouble from the very beginning

BY LIANNE GEORGE • Several months ago, a scuffle erupted in a Montreal elementary school over a Filipino-Canadian boy who was eating his lunch with a spoon and a fork—and no knife. The boy, who was seven, had been eating in the style customary to Filipinos, but his teacher, he said, called it "disgusting." She said he was a "pig" and forced him to eat alone as punishment. The incident garnered international outrage, particularly among activists in the Philippines who staged a protest outside the Canadian embassy in Manila, carrying cutlery-shaped signs that read, "We eat with spoons and are proud of it." Ironically, what the Montreal school probably didn't realize was that Canada's own long-established flatware traditions—namely our neat little family of knife, fork and spoon—have a turbulent cultural history of their own. A new book called *Feeding Desire: Design and the Tools of the Table 1500-2005*, produced by the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, explains, for instance, how the fork was a symbol of godlessness and sexual deviance long before it was a utensil for spearing prepared salads.

For the longest time in Western culture, there were only two dinner tools—the spoon and the knife. The spoon, with its soft, rounded underbelly, represented the culinary yin. "Used to feed infants and invalids," the authors write, "the spoon and its maternal characteristics transcend the voluptuous lines of its physical appearance." The knife, meanwhile, for reasons that should be self-evident, symbolized the more aggressively masculine aspects of eating: the slicing and skewering of bread and meats. "Virile evocations of the hunt suffuse the dinner knife," the authors write. For food items that required a bit more of a grip, like noodles, diners used their hands.

The dinner fork first made its appearance in sixth-century Byzantium as a "stabilizer of meat" for cutting, but it didn't catch on widely until the Italian Renaissance. The fork was trouble from the outset. Relative to the spoon and knife, it was an unsettlingly hermaphroditic utensil. On the one hand, it possessed "multiple sharp members." On the other, its head was slightly cupped, like a spoon. Many felt the early two-pronged forks were a little too reminiscent of a devil's pitchfork. It called to mind the apocryphal story of the Byzantine princess who married a Venetian doge in the 11th century and decamped to Italy. She refused to use her fingers when dining, insisting instead on using a fork to avoid soiling her delicate hands. The Venetians were horrified: food was a gift from God, and refusing to touch it suggested brazen impiety. When the princess fell ill and died a violent death not long after her arrival, the authors write, "opponents of the fork only confirmed their suspicions about her depravity and consorting with the Devil."

Nonetheless, in the late Middle Ages, the fork began showing up on the tables of Italian royalty and nobility, primarily for spearing sweetmeats and twirling slippery pasta noodles. By then, diners were also using forks to convey food to the mouth—which is why, over time, the customary number of tines evolved from two to three, and eventually four, for improved balance. Italian etiquette manuals from that period pronounced that "using a fork signalled courteous behaviour, itself a reflection of inner virtue." If anything, this only served to make the English and the French—who already felt the Italians were too fussy and effeminate—more fork-averse.

Still, there was no denying fork usage held certain practical advantages. For one thing, it made eating more hygienic. "As medieval patterns of communal life shifted toward increased sensitivity to the individual, the fork became ever more prominent," the authors write. "Once the fork was adopted, hands no longer reached into the common serving bowl." Also, hands were messy. By using a fork, diners were less likely to drip stew onto their clothing, and onto that of their immediate neighbour. "The expense of napery, and the time and difficulty of washing it, may have done more to encourage the fork's progress than abstract principles of hygiene."

Charles I of England—"with his French wife and Continental upbringing"—established the tradition in England. Soon, forks began popping up on tabletops across western Europe, and in the New World, where early Puritan settlers had deemed them an affectation. Still, British sailors couldn't shake the idea they were "unmanly." By the turn of the 20th century, they remained proudly among the last, sticky-fingered holdouts. M



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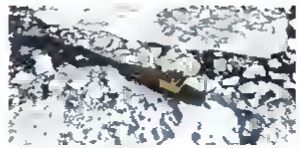
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Gael García Bernal, happy coffee people, Gulag Tunes and the Cat Chopper in our compendium of things that make life worth living

EGYPT IN CALGARY

The Glenbow museum's year long exhibit *Egypt, Greece and Rome. Art of the Ancient Mediterranean World* opens June 30. Don't miss the companion walking tours of the downtown, highlighting the influence of the ancients on Calgary's historic bridges and buildings. Until Sept. 3. (*Glenbow.org*)

LIGHTEN UP

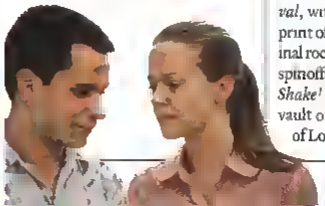
With the hot weather, men could use a change of underwear. We suggest the pima-cotton line from Calvin Klein—made from an ultra-soft and feather-light material.

CORN GOES PLASTIC

Before tossing that water bottle, consider the 1,000 years it takes to biodegrade. And, next time, buy Biota. Their plastic bottles are made from corn, not oil. Just don't try to reuse them. (*biotaspringwater.com*)

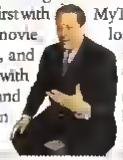
THE AMERICANIZING OF GAEL GARCÍA BERNAL

The Mexican heartthrob tackles his first English-language starring role in James Marsh's *The King*, a southern Gothic drama ripe with sex and menace. Bernal plays Elvis, a sailor fresh out of the Navy who tracks down a father he never met (William Hurt). As Elvis insinuates himself into a new family, Bernal proves that he can pass for an American. And none of his smouldering charisma gets lost in translation.



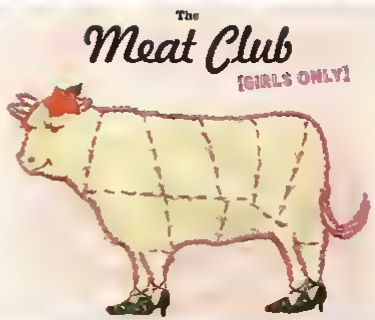
IT'S GETTING HOT IN HERE

Al Gore has got people talking about global warming—first with his lecture, then the movie *An Inconvenient Truth*, and now a companion book, with stunning photography and statistics. A good read on a smoggy day.



iTUNES—ON THE RUN

Working on a random computer and missing your music? MyTunesRSS, a free, downloadable application, lets you access your iTunes library and even create new playlists—from any browser. (*codewavede/products/mytunesrss*)



GRILL GIRLS

The aptly named *Meat Club Cookbook: For Gals Who Love Their Meat!*, this pink, frilly, innuendo packed recipe collection is a must for shy and repressed female carnivores seeking instruction on how to handle all varieties of meat. (*meatclubgirlsonly.com*)

JACK WHITE'S BIG ADVENTURE

The new music video for *Steady as She Goes*, from Jack White's band the Raconteurs, is worth checking out for the presence of Paul Reubens, who in a non-Pee wee Herman role is almost unrecognizable. The fact that the story revolves around an action-packed old time soapbox derby is an added bonus.

BEFORE WOODSTOCK

Criterion, the class act of DVD labels, presents *The Complete Monterey Pop Festival*, with a beautifully restored print of D.A. Pennebaker's original rockumentary, the director's spinoffs *Jimi Plays Monterey* and *Shake! Otis at Monterey*, plus a vault of outtakes. The Summer of Love never looked so good.



SHINY HAPPY COFFEE PEOPLE

"Wake up you sleepyhead, you can sleep when you are dead," sing a group of obnoxiously happy, glowing (literally) morning people in the latest ad from Folgers coffee. One part angel, one part Richard Simmons, watch them assault a collection of tired, seemingly hungover people with their catchy song and dance. (*youtube.com/watch?v=GQI2KlAurOg*)



VACATIONS OF THE RICH AND THE FAMOUS

Do it up international VIP style, in one of the Banyan Tree's 115 walled villas—each comes with an outdoor sunken tub. Keeping the Phuket, Thailand, exotic-ism in, and the paparazzi out, this coastal resort is a hot spa for hyper-swank. (*banyantree.com*)



STALIN'S BLUE HAWAII

Gulag Tunes, a collection of Russian prison songs delivered with a twangy surf panache, has sold out in Moscow and beyond. "We try to play traditional jailhouse songs in surf manner," says guitarist Mikhail Antipov, "to make this strange trashy style known worldwide."

HOG OR CATERPILLAR?

The Cat Chopper, from Caterpillar, was designed by the Orange County Choppers crew—of *American Chopper* fame. Check out the fat piping and black-and-yellow fittings on this bulldozer of bikes. (*cat.com*)

ROBERT 'BASEBALL BOB' WILLIAMS

1961-2006

Baseball, snowmobiling, hunting, sailing, skydiving. 'He played hard, like there was no tomorrow.'

Robert "Baseball Bob" Alvin Williams was born on April 27, 1961, in Moose Jaw, Sask., where there are as many ball diamonds as there are churches, some 38. His mother, Marion, was raised on a dairy farm nearby. She played baseball as a girl and has always cheered for the Toronto Blue Jays. His father, Don, is an avid outdoorsman, and made a living as a department manager at Sears before opening the All Season Sports store. Bob and his older sister, Debbie, worked there until their parents sold the shop and retired 18 years ago. Back then, the four of them played on a slo-pitch team together. "We did all right," says Marion.

Bob's love of baseball began early when, at the age of 8, Don and Marion had him join the local Little League. He was such a natural athlete, his mother recalls, that "he played all the bases as a child. He played the field, and he also pitched." Though he never took to playing ice hockey—skating wasn't his strongest skill—Bob excelled at floor hockey. Besides, he was consumed with another winter sport: snowmobiling. He'd speed and spin around the farm, and one time, when he went missing, Don found him stuck between two trees. "He put close to 100,000 miles on snowmobiles," estimates his father Don, who was only five when he first went hunting with his own father, was quick to share the adventure with Bob when he turned that age. Nearly every autumn after, the two of them went hunting for alpine and big game including geese, deer, elk and antelope. In the spring, they'd fish. On one of their first trips out, a young Bob became incurably seasick, but so unbearable was the thought of going ashore he begged to just keep fishing. They did.



His father was also the one who introduced Bob to motorcycling, albeit only after the 12 year-old implored, "Dad, how come you have a shop full of motorcycles and I don't have one?" Don gave Bob a mini-bike, and he graduated to various dirt and street bikes in the years that followed, eventually acquiring Yamahas from the motorcycle shop where he'd socialize with his travelling buddies. "He would ride them wherever he wanted to go," says Marion. Bob travelled to California for a chance to ride around a racetrack. In 10 days he rode all the way from Moose Jaw to Mexico and back. He biked across the country to southern Ontario, and throughout Western Canada. One of his favourite routes was along British Columbian logging trails, where he'd dirt bike with his friend Doug Sears, "just to see if they could get lost." During his first trip to Vancouver in 1981 with other friends, including John Parsons, Bob was thrown from his bike by a car. While he escaped with few injuries, his bike required a new handlebar. No sooner was that fixed and they were back on the road when John hit a deer at full speed and damaged his bike. The rest of the riders decided to keep going, but "Bob stuck with me, helping me in any way he could," recalls John.

Whatever Bob did, he excelled at—even when he didn't enjoy it—if it meant more opportunity for adventure. As a child, he hated school, but he was smart enough to skip two grades and graduate from high school at 17. After All Season closed, Bob took computer courses and was, for the last several years, a computer technician for IBM. "Sports—that's what he did when he wasn't working," says Don. Ever the bachelor, Bob broadened his athletic repertoire to include sailing, skydiving, skiing, golf, tennis, darts and racquetball. But baseball was always his favourite. "Growing up he played ball, but when he became an adult he really got into it," muses Don.

So much so that Bob joined four or five teams every season, which filled up almost every night of his week, and he played at the second-highest level of competitive softball in provincial and national tournaments. Bob usually was centre fielder, but this year he decided to try third base. One dusky recent Saturday, however, Bob was filling in as shortstop for his Chiefs team during a pre-season game in a men's 10-player league. A ball went up the midfield between him and the second baseman. Bob, who Don and Marion say "played hard, like there was no tomorrow," went for it, and his head collided with his teammate's shoulder. Bob was knocked out. Fans and players flooded the field. His brain swelled and bled. He was rushed to the hospital and underwent ineffective emergency surgery. Robert "Baseball Bob" Williams, 45, died on June 6, 2006.

A week later, some 20 motorcycles ridden by his travelling friends escorted Bob's hearse around Moose Jaw. On Canada Day weekend, his teammates will participate in a slo-pitch tournament to raise money for a memorial to be put up on the last diamond Bob ever played on.

BY CATHY GULLI

ILLUSTRATION BY GARRETT VAN WINKLE

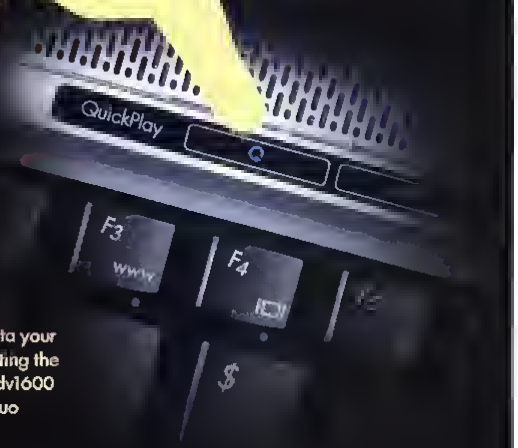
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